

The New REPUBLIC

July 5, 1943

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Congress Gambles with the War

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by Thomas Sancton

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. 109, NO. 1

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A Black Week

The week ending June 28 was in many ways the blackest for Americans since Pearl Harbor. We saw in Detroit the flaming of bitter, unreasoning race hatred entirely on a par with the worst actions of the Nazis in Germany. But the spectacle in Washington was not much better. There we saw a majority in Congress insist upon a so-called anti-strike law that can only have the effect of writing class war into legislation. It doesn't prevent strikes, but encourages them, and Congress knows it. It will give labor leaders a chance to become martyrs by going to jail, a chance some of them will be only too happy to take. It does nothing to break the grip of racketeers and gangsters upon a small minority of unions, which is the only union problem requiring legislative attention.

Congress' other action was to vote openly for inflation. Its members know that subsidies to marginal producers and processors are the only effective means of holding down prices. That is the device used in Canada and Great Britain, with high success. A million dollars spent this way can easily save consumers ten or twenty million dollars on higher prices. Congress rejected this plan for the deliberate purpose of bringing about inflation. It did this for the benefit, and at the behest, of big farmers, especially cattle raisers. These men in recent weeks have been withholding food supplies from the American people and from our armed forces, in order to blackmail Congress into this action. What they have done is certainly no better, and in many ways worse, than the actions of John Lewis and the coal miners, at whom they are so angry.

Congress is also motivated by the desire to discredit President Roosevelt and prevent any possibility of his being reëlected. Its hatred of the New Deal is pathological and unreasoning.

Profits Ahead of Patriotism

Congress' policy can be summed up briefly. Labor is to be kept down, by force if necessary. But prices are to go up, for the sake of the pocketbooks of the business men. It is not hard to see in this ominous overtones of the divisive weakness of France in 1939 and 1940.

We hardly need to point out what a tremendous help all this is to Germany and Japan. Our internal dissension is bad enough in truth, but it will look still worse from across the ocean. The Axis will be encouraged to fight on grimly, hoping that we shall crack up. And we shall fight back with depleted strength because so many Americans are still putting profit and prejudice ahead of patriotism.

By July 15

Labor set a new sort of deadline last week. CIO President Philip Murray told a conference of 300 delegates from labor, education, civic, church, farm and consumer groups, that the workers will break through the Little Steel formula and demand higher wages, unless by July 15 price control is made to work with a rollback to September 15 of last year. Here was the final, official admission of the extensive labor unrest and smoldering rebellion against the high cost of living we have continuously reported in The New Republic in recent weeks.

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Representatives of the AFL, which weeks ago urged the July 15 ultimatum, told the delegates to the consumer meeting that right now there are "strikes along the corn and meat front" as well as in the mines of the country. Let's pay for the war through taxes instead of high prices, they said.

The most significant thing about last week's meeting on the cost of living was that approximately forty congressmen took the lead in calling the meeting and shaping its deliberations. Its results were a call for: a stronger OPA, with a vigorous enforcement program, subsidies to roll back prices and keep them down, grade labeling and standard controls, dollars-and-cents ceilings and continued stabilization of rents.

This latest and most effective gathering to date to influence Congress to prevent inflation pledged itself to mobilize opinion in support of the administration's stabilization program. We hope its follow-up is as good as its opening blast.

No Bill of Attainder

The best news out of a bad-news Congress last week was the action of the Senate rejecting the commitments of its conference committee on the discharge of three by now famous civil servants, Robert Morss Lovett, Goodwin Watson and William E. Dodd. Previously the Senate had voted 69-0 against denying federal payroll funds to these men on the basis of the available evidence presented to show that they were guilty of "subversive" activities. In the course of conferences with House members, the Senate conferees on the measure had evidently come to the conclusion that passage of the urgent deficiency appropriation to which this question had been attached as a rider was so important that further delay could not be tolerated for any reason whatsoever.

The Senate disagreed with its conferees, 52-17. The debate was enough to rebuild sadly weakened confidence in our legislative branch of the government. Senator after Senator rose to express his rejection of the bill-of-attainder approach to this sort of problem and his doubts about the validity of the charges which had been so loosely lodged against the three men singled out for persecution by the terms of the appropriations rider.

Monarchy Again in Spain?

A few weeks ago *The Tribune*, a British labor weekly, made the charge that the Churchill government was plotting for the restoration of the monarchy in Spain. Although *The Tribune* has a high reputation for accuracy, this story seemed too fantastic to be believed, and attracted little attention. Now, however, the stolid Associated Press appears to confirm it. Dispatches from Berne, Switzerland, and London on June 23, published in *The New York Sun*, give substantiating data. Prince Juan, third son of the late King Alfonso, is

slated for the post; he was his father's choice. A man named Ventosa, described as a confidant of the late King, has been in London fixing things up with Churchill and other British government leaders; the Duke of Alba, who is the Spanish Ambassador to London, has been in Spain fixing things up with Prince Juan. These two men and about thirty other Spaniards, including members of the Cortes, the Spanish legislature, have written a joint letter to Franco urging that Prince Juan be put on the throne. The story from London virtually confirms all the foregoing, including the fact of British approval.

It would be interesting to know whether the American government was consulted about this disgraceful plan to restore a corrupt and decadent monarchy, and if so, whether the United States gave its consent. Here is a scheme which boldly gives the lie to every suggestion that we are fighting for democracy. Indeed, the whole suggestion is so monstrous that even now we find it almost unbelievable. Mr. Churchill should be forced to confirm or deny this story. And if he confirms it, the war will certainly assume a wholly different color to millions of those Americans without whose aid Mr. Churchill has no possible hope of victory.

Preparing for D-Day

Post-war planning begins with the soldier. Some day, millions of men will be returning from the battlefields. The success with which they will be reabsorbed into the economy of civilian life depends on provisions which must be made now, during war. Unfortunately, the plans now being drawn up for the rehabilitation of soldiers are perhaps best illustrated by the recent action of the New Jersey legislature, which, among several more far-sighted measures, passed a bill legalizing the issuance of free peddlers' licenses to servicemen, thereby providing for the return of the apple cart.

We need only remember the embittered veterans of a few years ago to realize that an apple in hand can become more dangerous than a grenade. Powerful reactionary forces, semi-fascist and fascist groups are at work today, preparing to utilize the bitterness and resentment of demobilized soldiers. If we do not know what to do with our demobilized men, these groups will certainly know. For good or for evil, the soldier coming home at the end of the war will bring with him a potential political power which can well be decisive in determining the shape of our post-war world.

Almost the entire problem of post-war reconstruction is epitomized in the problems of the returning soldier. Consequently, to plan his rehabilitation is to touch upon almost all the measures necessary in planning the peace. The kind of planning this involves is exemplified by the provisions which the Canadian government recently put into effect to reestablish the members of its armed forces. The Canadian program

embraces nine points covering physical rehabilitation, health and hospital services; vocational training and guidance; land settlement; facilities for completion of education; parity with other workers; grants for transitional adjustments; benefits for the unemployable; special vocational training for men maimed in the war, and laws making it mandatory for an employer to reemploy the men who worked for him before enlistment. The wisdom of this program lies not only in the range of its provisions—it is wise because it is early, because it has been drawn up in advance, ready to go into effect when the men return. Which is what we need now in this country, unless the deadly apples are once more to crop up in our streets.

Rickenbacker in the Wrong Place

What incredible dunderhead managed to send Eddie Rickenbacker to Moscow? It was about as sensible as it would have been to make Tom Paine ambassador to the Vatican. Rickenbacker is now known throughout this country and throughout the world as a labor-baiter. American trade unions dislike him bitterly because of his false and stupid charges against their patriotism—charges which turned to dust and blew away as soon as somebody (not Rickenbacker, you may be sure) took the trouble to investigate the facts. There is no possible good to be accomplished through any abilities he may possess that can offset the harm done by sending him to Russia.

Mr. Dies: Plea for Avoidance

There is one grim touch of humor in the otherwise unrelieved tragedy of the race riot in Detroit. Mayor Jeffries of that city has sent an urgent plea to Rep. Martin Dies and his Committee on Un-American Activities to keep away. Mr. Jeffries, putting into words what many other people have felt but were too polite to say, tells Mr. Dies that another investigation by him "would accomplish nothing at all." We seem to remember that a few years ago Mr. Dies spent a lot of money investigating conditions in Detroit; but if this investigation produced anything of value, we don't know what it was. Certainly it did not serve, as it should have done, to put the country on guard about the sort of wholesale murder that was witnessed there a few days ago.

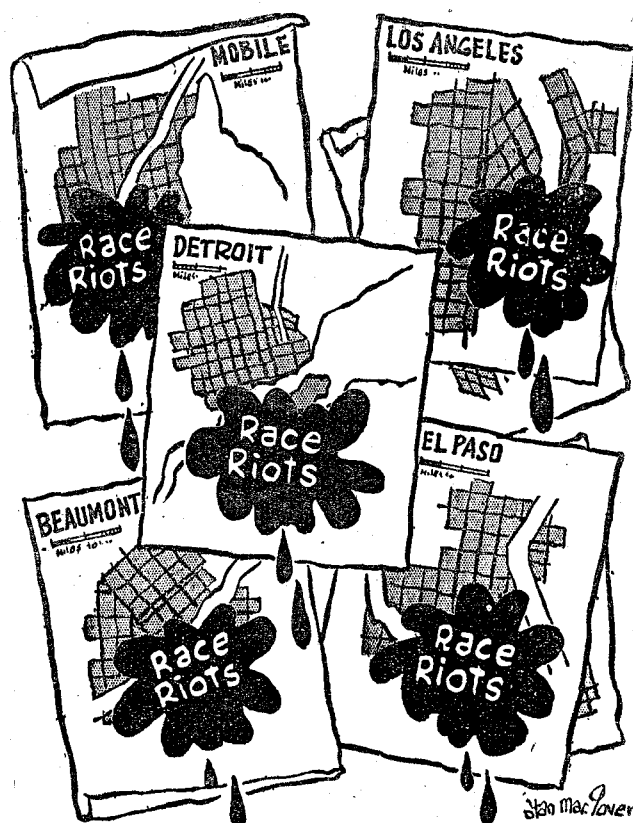
If the army could speak as bluntly as Mayor Jeffries, we suspect it would give Mr. Dies a similar message in regard to his investigation of conditions in the Japanese Relocation Centers. Mr. Dies, whose hatred of the Roosevelt administration is notorious, is all set to prove that the Japanese are being coddled unmercifully. If his charges are more than ten-percent true, then his previous record under similar circumstances belies him. The army, however, is on tenterhooks about the whole matter. They fear testimony may be brought out by inadvertence, not that some Japanese was given

three oranges at a single meal, but that some inmate of some camp was actually mistreated. The Japanese government has sworn to take reprisals against American prisoners in its hands if any of its nationals in this country are abused; and the Japanese government is fully capable of doing so, to the extent of unspeakable barbarity. The army will heave a great sigh of relief if Mr. Dies gets through this phase of his career without doing even more harm than usual.

The NYA

At the end of last week, Congress was trying to decide whether to destroy the National Youth Administration. One hesitates to make an appeal to the intelligence and fair-mindedness of a body that has recently shown so few signs of possessing either; but we may point out that if the NYA is ended, it will be a serious blow to the war effort. For more than a year, the NYA has done nothing that was not directed solely to helping the war. It has trained 600,000 young men and women in factory skills of all kinds; at present, about one-half the trainees are women. This work is done in more than 500 communities and at 39,000 "work stations"—meaning one or more machines in a factory that are available for one trainee for every shift.

These young people learn while doing, which is the best pedagogical method that is known; but even their training turns out useful products. The army, the navy, the Maritime Commission and other agencies provide raw materials without charge; the NYA works them up without charge. In this way more than 1,200,000



MacGovern in The New York Post

The Shame of the Cities

parts have been made for the Portsmouth Navy Yard; even more for the Rock Island Arsenal; and huge additional quantities for other military establishments.

In addition, about 40,000 persons have been enabled by the NYA to stay in college when they otherwise could not have done so. They are trained as badly needed technicians, doctors, dentists, chemists, engineers, metallurgists and so on. Contrary to hostile propaganda put out by Senator Byrd, NYA operations cost no more than those of any other, comparable agency. That the NYA goes where the need is most urgent is shown by the fact that in one year 10,500 training places have been opened or closed. This made it possible, for example, for a single NYA training center to give 1,500 welders to a single Kaiser shipyard. If Congress, in its bitter desire to smash every vestige of the New Deal, decides to destroy the NYA, it will indeed have some explaining to do.

They Won't Keep Still

There are some things that Washington seems quite unable to learn. For about a year and a half various officials, mostly in the Office of Price Administration, have been announcing that something or other was about to be rationed. Thereupon the citizens rushed to buy up as much as they could of this product, and created a shortage even though one did not already exist. Time and time again, Washington was urged

for goodness' sake to keep its mouth shut; but practically never has it done so. The mistake was made again a few days ago, when it was announced that because of the shortage of gasoline it might be necessary to cancel temporarily all A ration books. Naturally, every holder of such a book rushed to fill his tank with gasoline against the coming aridity. The announcement was repudiated one day later; but by then the harm had been done. It looks as though, on this particular point, Washington is incurable and hopeless.

Our Vanishing Oil Supply

Secretary Knox told us the other day, what oil geologists have been saying for many years, that our resources of crude oil in the ground in the continental United States would be exhausted in perhaps fifteen or twenty years. It is of course possible that there are still large undiscovered deposits, though this is not very likely. It is also possible to get oil from shale and from sand. Some of the vast new oil fields in northern Canada which have been exploited in recent months are of the last-named type. But more important ultimately is the fact that science now knows how to make gasoline out of almost any sort of growing plant. We should certainly husband our resources of crude oil as carefully as possible; but no one need think that when they are gone, gasoline-propelled vehicles will come to a halt.

Congress Gambles with the War

BY COMPARISON WITH WHAT HAPPENED LAST WEEK in Congress, the events on Black Friday of the week before seem now to have been just a ripple. The full tide of the congressional campaign against the war economy and the war administration came when Congress nailed down, over a presidential veto, the Smith-Connally anti-labor bill, and when it also banned the use of any subsidies by the OPA in its attempts to roll back and stabilize prices. There was something almost sadistic in the fury with which Congress dealt the death-blow to an OPA already crippled by earlier congressional action. And there was something almost obscene in the haste with which the vote overriding the veto of the labor bill was pressed.

We have written at length in the columns of The New Republic on both the case of wartime strikes and the case of the OPA and wartime prices. Where the spotlight is needed now is on Congress itself. We do not mean to condemn an entire legislative body. There are good men and valiant men in both Houses, but they are now in a minority. The majority can best be described as an unholy alliance between the Republicans (with terribly few exceptions) and the Tory Democrats—an alliance that has been growing in strength and self-confidence ever since the 1942 elec-

tions. It was in those elections that the fate of the succeeding two years on the home front was sealed. The editors of The New Republic were considered in some quarters to hold a morbid view of the consequences of those elections. But even the most morbid view could scarcely have envisaged the full density and extent of the home-front crisis that the Unholy Alliance would precipitate.

What is it that motivates these men? Some of them are undoubtedly convinced that President Roosevelt is a dangerous madman, leading the country toward a tyrannical socialist state, and determined to destroy them and their liberties. But those who suffer from this form of paranoia can be but few. Others, who have always hated and feared labor, have grown hysterical on account of the crisis in the coal mines, and have convinced themselves that drastic repression must be applied to the entire labor movement because of the sins of John L. Lewis. Still others are the more or less conscious representatives of special-interest groups in their community, and they vote along the lines laid down by the National Association of Manufacturers or the farm lobbies, rather than in terms of the national interest.

But, whether guided by hatred, blindness, fear or

interest, they all unite on one thing. They are determined to smash the prestige of President Roosevelt and the hold he has on the minds and the hearts of the large mass of Americans. They have their eye on this single object. They are, of course, also patriotic, and most of them believe themselves to be strongly anti-fascist. But in the clash of divergent purposes, there is a political cunning that leads them unerringly to their primary objective. With them first things come first—but they are the wrong first things: not the winning of the war, the crushing of fascism, the assurance of a free world: but rather the winning of the 1944 elections, the crushing of the New Deal administration, the assurance of a world free for the unhampered play of corporate power.

If you start with the objective of smashing Roosevelt, what better way is there than to confuse and disarrange the war economy? Prices touch our daily lives more than anything else in the war. A hundred times during the day our most direct point of contact with the war, so far as the home front is concerned, lies in our purchases. If prices go zooming up, if price controls fail, if a Black Market is created, if—from the resultant confusion—food scarcities arise, the confidence of the ordinary man and woman in the President and the war administration is undermined. If repressive measures are applied to labor—not only to the coal miners, but to the great bulk of organized labor that has stood loyally by its no-strike pledge—unrest will develop there, too. With wages stationary and prices going up in the absence of effective controls, labor will feel the heavy burden of injustice; union leaders will be caught between the demands of their men for strikes and their own no-strike pledges; a wedge will be driven between the workers and their leaders. And if, because of the pressure of rising prices, strikes do result, then all the volcanic anti-labor feeling in the American middle class will burst forth, and its full fury will be directed against labor for striking, and against the administration for allowing the strikes.

This is, in the large, a smart strategy for those who wish to destroy Roosevelt. And each political group has the right, within the limits of the Constitution, to use what strategy it wishes.

But the thing that should cause deep concern among all Americans, whatever may be their political persuasion, is that in the process of employing this strategy, the Unholy Alliance in Congress is gambling with the war. If you give labor the sense that, in the classic words of William Jennings Bryan, there has been pressed down upon its brow a crown of thorns, you will be destroying the all-important morale of the soldiers of production. If you breed an anti-labor hatred among the middle-class groups of the nation, you split the basic unity required for victory. If you remove the controls from rising prices, cut down on the budget of the OPA, prevent the price-control enforcers from

using their only practicable weapon of subsidies in order to keep food prices down while keeping the incomes of the farmers adequate to induce production, then you cause complete chaos in the price structure of America.

Lowered labor morale means lowered war production. Repressive labor laws which breed unrest and create strikes mean drastically cut war production. Class hatreds mean a loss of the will to victory. Price confusion means hardship on the lower income groups, as well as enormous increases in the cost of running the war.

That is the meaning of what Congress has done. Nor is it merely an incidental by-product of the actions of the reactionary majority in Congress. *It is the necessary means for achieving their objective.* Since thus far there has been no point at which the President's military conduct of the war could be effectively attacked, the only recourse of the Unholy Alliance has been to cause confusion, distrust and divided purposes on the home front. And this can best be done by sabotaging the war economy and the war administration. It can best be done by withholding funds from crucial war agencies on the home front, so that they do not have the means to accomplish their purpose. It can best be done by banning outright such essential techniques as price subsidies. It can best be done by driving a wedge between middle-class and labor groups.

It is small wonder that one of the more primitive representatives of this strategy—Colonel McCormick of The Chicago Tribune—should in his crude way blurt out what the congressional leaders are trying to do in their more cunning way. In an editorial headed "The Second American Revolution" Colonel McCormick calls for a revolt against the war administration of President Roosevelt. He hedges himself by saying that it must be in the traditional peaceful way of the Americans; but the entire mood of the editorial is that of violent hatred and deliberate sabotage of the purposes and techniques of the war.

What all this means is that America is now in the throes of its greatest home-front crisis since the attack that brought us into the war. The same forces that fought conscription, and were only a vote away from blocking its passage, are now fighting the effective prosecution of the war on the home front. The crisis has its political aspect—the clash between the President's policies and those of the congressional majority, culminating in the vote overriding the presidential veto of the Smith-Connally bill. But it has also a deeper social aspect. It is, in its deepest sense, a crisis of national unity in wartime. It is a crisis in the national will to victory.

There is a brash confidence among most Americans that victory is already in their grasp. It may be this confidence that enables Congress to gamble so recklessly with wartime production, wartime morale, war-

time national unity. The Unholy Alliance may be relying so completely on the margin of victory which American and British soldiers in Tunisia and Russian soldiers in Stalingrad have given us by their blood and their agony, that they feel they need not concern themselves unduly with such things as unity, morale and production.

If so, they are wrong. It is still possible for us to lose the war. And it is certain that with such tactics on the home front, even if we win the war it will be prolonged by the action of Congress. This break in our national unity is exactly what Hitler has all along counted on. It cannot help giving him comfort. It cannot help giving him and his Nazis renewed hope that an unconditional surrender will not be required of them.

This is a great responsibility, a vast burden, that Congress has taken upon itself. For all the unfairness of the reactionary press and the confusion it spreads among the people, the ordinary American will in the long run discover the role that Congress has been playing. The Unholy Alliance will have to answer for their actions not only at the bar of history. They will have to answer for them when the American people come to strike the balance sheet of the war. And they will have to answer for them, finally and terribly, in their own consciences.

Sokolsky's Queer Economics

FOR MAXIMUM MISINFORMATION in a small space, we commend you to an article by George Sokolsky, the syndicated voice of Tory big business, that appeared a few days ago. Mr. Sokolsky wants no subsidies to keep down prices, and he falls all over himself in trying to argue against them. He quotes unnamed cattlemen who talked to him as saying their chief grievance against the Office of Price Administration is that the OPA is driving the small packers out of business and they need, they dearly love, the small packers. But in fact the whole purpose of the subsidies is to keep small packers, and others like them, in business. Remarks Sokolsky: "The cattlemen say that if the government will turn back the industry to the men who know and understand it, the American people will eat steaks and there will be enough for the armed forces and for lease-lend." Weasel words! The government hasn't taken over the industry. No one doubts that meat production will be large under any circumstances. The question is one of price. The cattlemen want prices far higher than at present: high enough to bring on an epidemic of strikes because of the increase in the cost of living.

This author tells a horrendous story of a vast number of cattle which were rushed into the slaughterhouses weighing eighty pounds less than they should

have done, thus sacrificing a large supply of meat. For this, according to Mr. Sokolsky, the OPA was to blame. He doesn't say why; he simply says that the cattlemen charge that the OPA "balled up their business" so much as to make it necessary. But nobody ordered the cattlemen to slaughter their herds prematurely. If they did so, it was only because they thought they could make more money that way.

Sokolsky then remarks that subsidies in Great Britain are no analogy for subsidies over here because—believe it or not—Lend-Lease is paying for the British subsidies. They are \$508,000,000 a year, but Lend-Lease food from the United States is worth \$797,000,000, this food being sold for cash to British consumers. Ergo, we are paying for the subsidies.

The only trouble with this is that it is simply not so. In the first place, Sokolsky's figures are wrong. Food subsidies in England now cost \$720,000,000 annually, not \$508,000,000. In the second place, not all the American food is sold to the British public. Large parts of it are consumed without payment, by soldiers. In the third place, British retail prices on the food that is actually sold are lower than American estimated prices. All in all, Britain is lucky to get back a little more than half of the American cash value of Lend-Lease food. In the fourth place, Britain spends a lot of money because of the American army in her midst, money which offsets Lend-Lease, and is inflationary in effect, whereas subsidies are deflationary. For example, she spent \$600,000,000 building barracks, etc., for the American army. She spends \$30,000,000 annually to keep them up. She pays the wages of all British civilians working for the American army.

In short, Lend-Lease and the British subsidies have no relation to each other. British subsidies have kept prices down, while our prices are soaring. But of course, Mr. Sokolsky and his friends care nothing about all this. They, like Congress, are not interested in facts but in results. They want higher prices.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

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The Race Riots

ALL THESE WORDS of anguish which swirl and flow through the press and out upon the air waves in the wake of the Detroit race riot are useless. The thing is done. What we say about the riot can never raise thirty-one men and women from the grave. What we say about it can never heal smashed mouths and ruptured eyeballs. It can never quiet the terrors of a hundred thousand Negro children who will remember all their lives what happened to them here in America. It can never replace lost tanks and planes. It can never redeem the legion of lost Americans, the fascists of Detroit. It can never silence the Tokyo radio. We have lost a battle in Detroit. It was a clean defeat. Nothing was salvaged.

There will be many official and unofficial explanations of the riot. We shall hear over and over again about the first fistfight between a white man and a Negro on Belle Isle bridge; about the rumor which swept immediately through the Negro residential areas that a Negro baby had been thrown from the bridge; about a rumor which swept through the white sections that a Negro had killed a white girl on the island. Mayor Jeffries of Detroit has already given what looks like the official white-folks line-up on the day's events: The Negroes began the rioting, wrecked white property, attacked white men in the Negro section. Then, "The white people were slow getting started, but when they did get started they sure made up for lost time."

In the absence of a thorough, reliable report, it is impossible yet to tell exactly what took place during the riot and what the causes were. Most of the accounts in the daily press have been sent out by white reporters. They constitute a white-man's version of the riot. But what can we honestly say in the face of the abundant internal evidence of their news photographs, and the unintended implications of their stories?

Every one of the sixteen victims shot down by Detroit's predominantly Southern police force the first day of the rioting were Negroes. The news photographs of the flaming, exploding automobiles show the destruction of Negro property, not white. There are pictures of Negroes lying dead and wounded on the streets; begging for mercy; running like animals before white mobs armed with pipes and beer bottles. Almost without exception, the pictures of those arrested show only Negroes, men and women, lined up like cattle, hands above their heads. There is one revealing picture of a bewildered Negro man held by two policemen, and being struck by a white rioter; something speaks out from that picture beyond any force of argument; the white man knew the police were with him. There is a picture of a Negro cowering

against a wall as two policemen came in fast with clubs. Twenty-five of the thirty-one dead are Negroes.

The local newspaper accounts contained paragraphs like this one from The Detroit News:

"Sturks and Hamilton [Detroit policemen] then entered the store and were confronted by two unidentified Negroes who began cursing the officers. The patrolmen fired simultaneously and both Negroes crumpled to the floor, dead."

Negroes must certainly have rioted, destroyed white property, fought back, when they had the chance, in defense of their lives. But it is the Negroes who do the suffering and the dying in American riots; the dark and agonizing knowledge of it hangs over them all the days of their lives. They don't start riots. They are the victims.

One feels the futility of trying to say anything of any usefulness or meaning about what happened in Detroit. A blind man could see it coming. For three years the country has witnessed an unending succession of warnings of race riots—from individuals ranging from reactionary white Southerners to radical Northern whites and Negroes. Most of the warners, it is true, had views of America and of democracy that were themselves irreconcilably in conflict; but all who gave any thought to the race problem knew that it had reached a dangerous crisis. And nowhere was the fact more apparent than in Detroit.

In the last three years Detroit has swollen and festered with all our accumulated national poisons. Detroit brought them to an ugly, pustulate head. There was race hate there older than the Nazi Party, older than the American Constitution; and there were new treasons and new traitors, rank with the fascist evil. Detroit is our fourth largest city, with two and a half million population in the greater industrial area. Hundreds of thousands of these were Negro families, who came up from Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Louisiana during the last war and through the twenties. Special trains were run from Southern cotton fields to carry the Negro migration. Later, during the thirties and especially after present armament expansion began, white Southerners and other outlanders, by the hundreds of thousands, came to work in the plants. The old subdued, muted, murderous Southern race war was transplanted into a high-speed industrial background. I do not mean that the presence of Southern whites and Negroes was alone responsible for the Detroit tension, but it was one of the important factors. There were other raw, fascist-minded newcomers. There were other distinct, clannish groups like the Poles.

The Ku Klux Klan took on new life in Detroit. It

signed up thousands of members, streamlined its organization, used the Communist boring tactics and heavily infiltrated the United Automobile Workers. The Southern Society, loyal to a similar ideology, built up a membership of some 16,000. The Black Legion flourished. Father Coughlin built up his first great following there—and a fat war chest for American fascism. Frank Norris, the hell-shouting, Negro-hating Texas preacher, opened a tabernacle in this fertile city and it prospered; he built up one of the biggest “congregations” in Detroit and began to commute back to Texas by airplane. Gerald L. K. Smith, once a Louisiana preacher, who fled with other political stooges when Huey Long was killed, at length found a spiritual home again in Detroit.

There was a coming together of sharks: race-hate preachers and various other kinds of shouters from the South; seditionists and anti-Semites from New York and Brooklyn and Boston; German traitors. The Nazi Bund grew up there. Fritz Kuhn and many of its other leaders found steady employment in the Henry Ford plant. Any capable agitator who wanted to get out a fascist propaganda sheet, or start an organization, could usually get financed by one industrialist or another. The Sunday broadcasts over Detroit's radio stations were a babble of racism, fundamentalism, ignorance and guile. They stank of an anti-democratic ferment going on below the city's surface. No city, North or South, could match this hellish Sunday symphony of the Detroit radio stations.

The National Workers' League was another organization which helped give Detroit its Nazi tone. The League's benevolent interest in workers manifested itself in projects like the incitement of the Sojourner Truth housing riot two years ago. In this instance, it will be remembered, occupants of a new Negro housing unit were stoned and driven temporarily from the area. The inciters of the riot tried to create the impression that white “neighbors” of the project had risen in a wave of spontaneous anger to block the project by force. A check of the license plates of some of these “neighbors” revealed that they came from as far as twenty-five miles away. And finally Parker Sage and Garland Alderman, officials of the National Workers' League, were indicted for inciting the riot: indicted, long months ago, but never brought to trial. A stiff jail sentence for the guilty in the Sojourner Truth incident would have been strong and simple American propaganda. Perhaps for that reason, none of the officials of Detroit had courage enough to carry through this case.

The Eleanor Club myth—stories of conspiratorial Negro groups organized by Mrs. Roosevelt—was deeply rooted in the city. This piece of propaganda is so perfectly tailored to the American race problems that it seems unbelievable it was not created in the German Propaganda Ministry. Beyond a mild and supremely negative announcement by Attorney General Biddle

that the FBI had not been able to find the existence of any Eleanor Clubs, no effort remotely approaching adequacy has been made by the government to combat this effective enemy lie.

The Ethiopian Pacific League worked the Negro side of the street. This is a fifth-column organization started years before Pearl Harbor by the Japanese. It is tailored to Negro hate and ignorance with the same consummate expertness that the Eleanor Club lie was patterned for the whites. Led by Negro traitors, a number of whom have been imprisoned, the League advanced the Japanese as the champions of all colored races and sought the aid of American Negroes against the whites. The basic loyalty of Negroes in this country is unshaken; they are cynical of much hypocritical white oratory, and in their own minds millions of them are as earnest to win withheld rights and dignities in America as they are to win the war abroad; but basically they know it is a United Nations and not an Axis victory which contains the promise of a better life for them. Yet in quagmires of hate like Detroit, the Ethiopian movement has achieved some following, and there must certainly have been a few Negro provocateurs in the group of riot conspirators—traitors to America and traitors to the Negro people.

The city became gravely overcrowded as war work expanded. There was, and is, a housing scandal. Real-estate investors—aided by industrialists who did not want their migratory workers to become entrenched and independent—blocked any chance for a strong and adequate federal housing program to take care of the most primary needs of the workers in the arsenal of democracy. Trailer camps grew up, and with them a sizable population of delinquent, rootless “trailer boys”—the cruel, pitiable, negative young savages who are good for riots and for fascist *Putsches*. Negroes and whites lived in overcrowded quarters. They competed for what little housing was available, competed for food in the markets, competed for seats in the movie houses. Negroes learned skills. (Yes, Negroes *can* learn them, and this is one of the elemental causes of our race war.) Negroes were put in jobs where only white men had worked.

Sunday was a hot day in the city. The Belle Isle recreation island in the Detroit River was packed with sweltering, irritable whites and blacks. A fight broke out on the bridge. Whites and Negroes joined. The provocateurs went to work throughout the city. The Detroit riot, which everyone knew was coming, had begun.

Here is a partial list of the race clashes which have occurred within the past few weeks:

Detroit—riot.

Beaumont—riot; two killed, seventy-five injured; Negro section of the city “stomped into the ground,” according to a city official; war production cut down.

Mobile—riot; more than a score of Negro ship workers beaten; large shipyard thrown out of production for several days.

Camp Stewart, Georgia—riot between Negro soldiers and white military police; one white MP killed and four others wounded; caused by long-standing discriminations and friction and the alleged beating of the wife of a Negro soldier by a white MP.

Marianna, Florida—lynching; white men seize and beat to death a Negro prisoner whose conviction for the hammer-slaying of a white man was twice overturned by the state supreme court.

Los Angeles—riots against Mexicans and Negroes.

Newark, New Jersey—gang warfare between white and Negro youths; one Negro killed.

El Paso, Texas—clash between white soldiers and a group of Negro soldiers who were rushing to El Paso from Fort Bliss because they had heard false rumors of rioting; one Negro soldier killed and one white soldier critically wounded.

Fort Custer, Michigan—five Negroes of a quartermaster battalion were arrested for trying to seize arms and trucks to go to the aid of Detroit's Negroes.

Collins, Mississippi—ten Negro soldiers arrested, one clubbed, one shot, when a Negro baseball team returning to Camp Shelby was stopped by a white policeman for speeding.

Centreville, Mississippi—"investigation" of local conditions begun by army inspector general's office following trouble between townsmen and Negro soldiers at Camp Van Dorn; one soldier dead.

Philadelphia—four Negroes beaten by a mob of white boys.

Washington—race-riot rumors sweep the capital.

What has caused this mounting race crisis? Has it been the radical leadership of white and Negro individuals? Or has it been a general shift of the economic and spiritual position of the Negro group relative to the white group; a taking up of new bases, long desired by Negroes, but only made possible by the war? It seems to me the second answer is obvious. This shift cannot be divorced of course from the leadership and agitation of individuals; but the swift tides of war and race conflict sweeping through all countries of the world have caused both the change in Negro outlook and the ascendancy of aggressive Negro leadership.

One leading Southern writer views the situation thus: "A small group of Negro agitators and another small group of white rabble-rousers are pushing this country closer and closer to an interracial explosion," etc. And it seems to me that this is meaningless. Where does India fit into this picture? China? Japan? Where do the awakening colored millions of the earth, a two-thirds majority, of which the American Negroes are a part, fit into the picture? Does such reasoning deny they are awakening; does it believe that the white

man's monopoly of technology, his knowledge of guns and ships and planes and trades, will remain hermetically sealed within his race forever? That if he continues to insist on his master-racism, his arrogance, his de-facto privilege and overlordship of the earth, that he will not be called on in a few brief decades to prove his racial superiority?

A Mississippi editor, in a less sophisticated editorial, reduces this reasoning to its essence: "It is blood on your hands, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt. More than any other person, you are morally responsible for those race riots in Detroit where two dozen were killed. . . . You have been personally proclaiming and practising social equality at the White House and wherever you go, Mrs. Roosevelt. In Detroit, a city noted for the growing impudence and insolence of its Negro population, an attempt was made to put your preachments into practice, Mrs. Roosevelt. . . ." And this too is meaningless. What are these words—"impudence," "insolence"? In whose framework do they repose? As we battle and struggle down the years through the islands of the Pacific, needing our colored allies, clinging to them, who is going to have the privilege of defining these words, Mississippi editors or the millions of dark Chinese and Indians who are with us against the millions of dark Japanese who are against us?

The causes of the Detroit race riot do not exist only as of today or yesterday, and only in relation to the war. They exist in time and history. In one paragraph, Charles S. Johnson, the sociologist, gives the story¹:

Subject races may take over the standards, taboos and other cultural elements of the dominant group, including even the concept of their own inferior status. This, indeed, frequently happens in a slave, or caste, organization of society; and no urgent race problems arise as long as the subject races accept or rationalize their position. The symbols of authority, preserved in the etiquette of race relations and in the conventions, crystallize into customs, which are enforced by informal means. Such a status quo, however, cannot be maintained indefinitely. The process of acculturation will inevitably cause a disturbance of fixed racial roles; for the influences of penetrating economic, political and religious forces cannot be isolated; nor can these elements of a dominant culture divorce themselves from others which are bound up in the web of personal relationships. There is no avenue of escape from the social and biological consequences of contact. Mixed-blood populations and culturally marginal peoples emerge. Adoption of the dominant cultural standards and values produces new wants, new aspirations and new ambitions among the subject peoples.

Mr. Roosevelt is faced with a race problem as grave as the one which faced Lincoln. The tragedy is that he almost certainly does not know this. The President has shown greatness as a military leader, and history may accord him a fuller measure than we dream. Yet, if he continues to lose his grip on domestic issues, his failure

¹ "Patterns of Negro Segregation," Harpers, \$3.50.

as a President may in the end be even greater. If it happens, history must render a merciless verdict against the little group of yes-men and intriguers who are his immediate advisers.

What have they been telling Mr. Roosevelt for months and years about the race crisis?

Okay, Boss. Okay, okay, okay. It's all okay, Boss. Everything will blow over. Don't get excited. Don't get worried. Don't think unpleasant thoughts, Boss. It will all blow over. We'll dust off this Negro delegation for you.

Long ago, a year ago at least, when riot rumors and hysteria had already swept the South; when cities like Memphis and Norfolk and others had all but been plunged into the first, inevitable race riots; when Ku Klux Klan oratory was lighting the fuses of Mobile and Beaumont and Detroit (and others yet to come); the President should have come to this nation and talked to us as he did on the coal strike, on black markets, on war bonds, on a score of other subjects which already have been buried by the rubble of history.

Why, in these months when the peril of open race war hung upon the air, hasn't Mr. Roosevelt come to us with one of his greatest speeches, speaking to us as Americans, speaking to us as the great mongrel nation; immigrants (and the descendants of immigrants) all of us; none of us the master race, none of us independent of the other; why hasn't he come to us and talked to us in the simple and genuine language that Lincoln might have used, why hasn't he come waking memories of the old American dream, of live and let live, of a land where all men are endowed with inalienable rights, of a country where all are created equal? We are a people often cruel and cynical; but a great moment does not fail to move us.

Why does not the President come to us NOW with such a speech? He must! The race situation is not okay, Mr. Roosevelt, whatever the subtle men whisper. There will be other riots in America. Only a strong federal policy may prevent them.

There are many things that could be done to create a strong federal policy. (Even this casual citing of possible methods seems futile when we cannot get a *speech* out of Mr. Roosevelt.) There has been recent competent study in the field by people like Carey McWilliams, whose book, "Brothers Under the Skin," develops impelling arguments for establishing race relations on the basis of an affirmative national policy. He suggests a National Fair Racial Practices Act paralleling the Wagner Act, with an enforcement arm like the National Labor Relations Board. McWilliams proposes the creation of a congressional committee to conduct a broad study of the race problem. It seems to me that a report making comprehensive recommendations by a board with prestige and ability, such as the TNEC reports, might also serve this purpose. Certainly a division could be created in the Interior Department,

equipped with real authority and charged with permanent attention to the race problem.

There are many things that could be done without causing another civil war. But all of them, even the mildest, will meet with political resistance from the South. Whether Mr. Roosevelt will be able to measure the necessity against the political cost we shall see; he has failed miserably to do so in the past.

Negroes must continue to leave the South. Negroes have been a fearful element in white Southern thinking too long. When their numbers grow less in the South, when the white Southerner is no longer confronted with disturbing images like the rural towns on Saturday nights overrun by a sea of black faces, and when Negro labor is no longer so abundant and so cheap, the white South may begin to fear the Negro less and value him more; and then programs may be considered even in the South, with a fair chance of succeeding. One of the most callous and tragic elements that has grown up in the Southern character is the tendency to consider the Negro an actual beast of burden, with no rights at all, not even the right of leaving. Southerners hate the Negro, but rather than see their cheap labor vanish, they will "put up" with him forever—indeed, insist upon it. But a program similar to the Farm Security Administration is needed to lend Negro families money to get out of the South in large numbers and to help them settle in sections in the North and West. Here they will find no paradise, but at least will have a chance at a few of the decent things of life, and some education. Even though the greatest racist of them all, Senator Bilbo, proposes sending Negroes back to Africa, many Southerners would greet with howls of rage and anguish any proposal to aid the migration of dollar-a-day cotton pickers. (There are many instances of this in Southern newspapers, and in Southern books like the late Will Percy's "Lanterns on the Levee.")

But such a program must eventually be attempted. The race problem, centered as it has been in Southern states, has been a cyst in our national anatomy. We must break it up, absorb it. Like a wounded man who, in his pain, lashes out against those who would help, the Southern people turn on the proponents of any kind of change, and resent any discussion of the problem. This is the deepest tragedy in American history, a people of virtue and courage, who have been blinded.

Here is a revealing paragraph from an editorial in *The Ruston, Louisiana, Leader*, titled "California Bound." The editor blames the New Deal because his "black boy has left after ten years of good and faithful service . . . without warning, without providing any relief and in doing so he has put us in a terribly awkward situation."

. . . He has become the victim of our government's thoughtless program and has removed one more good laborer from the South where they are the muscle and

backbone of our livelihood. Numbers of good Negro workmen have left the businesses and farms of this parish, possibly never to return, and the hardship which they are putting upon us who need them is going to ruin this section of the nation unless we find some way to remedy the situation. The bad part about this is that the very best of our Negroes are leaving. Those we have educated and trained to be useful not only to us but to be leaders among their own people are among the first ones to go chasing rainbows.

It is hard to convey in words how deep-seated and ineradicable such intellectual brutality can be in the South. But the migration of the Negro northward and westward must continue; and it must continue under the guidance of sound federal policy so that congestion in a few Northern cities will not lead to friction and riots as it has in the past. But even with the riots of the past, even with ghettos like Harlem, the Negro

people have been helped by the migration northward.

The United States never needed more gravely than it does today a strong and intelligent federal policy on the race issue. What shield can it be, what group of men, what one individual, what set of circumstances, which stand between the President and this fact? Whatever it is, may its place be accursed in history.

As a nation we sat with vacant eyes and waited for Pearl Harbor. For two years we sat and watched the Detroit riot in the making. How many other riots will we wait upon before acting? The situation recalls the fatalism of Alexander Stephens of Georgia before the election of 1860: "Men will be cutting one another's throats in a little while. In twelve months we shall be in a war, the bloodiest in history. There are not virtue and patriotism and sense enough left in the country to avoid it."

THOMAS SANCTON

What to Do About Labor

THE PASSAGE of anti-strike legislation by Congress, over the President's veto, will not stop strikes, but is likely to provoke them. There is nothing in it, for instance, which can get the miners back to work. Instead of defending merely their economic interests, workers will now be striking to defend their liberty. The mine crisis is not over; it is at best postponed. And if it is settled by a mere expedient, the same kind of trouble is likely to arise in industry after industry, unless the war administration soon finds a way really to stabilize the economy. For if John L. Lewis should have learned that neither he nor his union can afford to hold up production for long during a war, no matter what the status of a wage dispute, the nation should have learned at the same time that no personal feud could have precipitated this controversy unless both the miners and the bulk of organized labor outside the mines were strongly dissatisfied and had been forced to conclude that a demonstration of economic power was necessary to produce a remedy.

This incident has cost us more than 20,000,000 tons of coal, with whatever delay in war production that implies. But if we learn our lesson from it, the price will have been cheap. It will be like the percussion cap set off by a railroad train, which warns the engineer to stop in order to avoid a collision.

It is not well to get the jitters about the home front. If the Axis believes we shall lose the war as a result of internal dissension, it is making a miscalculation. The American habit is not to conceal and suppress controversies, but to blow them up three or four times life-size and float them off like Fourth-of-July balloons for everyone to see. We could have a rise in the cost of living twice as great as that which has occurred, with accompanying wage increases, or we could go without

a lot more food, or we could lose millions more man-days of labor through strikes than we have lost, and still win the war. Nothing that has happened yet is as serious as a single all-out bombing raid. No war of our history has been fought without a much closer approach to devastating inflation; no one of our allies has suffered anything like so small a sacrifice as we.

Nevertheless the task of stabilizing the economy is of immense importance in the second war which is being fought alongside the first, the war which will not be completed until after the unconditional surrender of our military enemies. This is the struggle for post-war full employment, vigorous democracy and lasting peace. Unless we get the economy under control now, injustices and discontents will multiply, unwise emergency measures will be forced upon us and we shall arrive at such a state of confusion that after military victory the peace is likely to be lost.

The warning we have experienced ought to be read in these terms. Many have gloated over the bitter hostility expressed against the strikers by soldiers at the front. This hostility is inevitable under the circumstances, but it is nothing to gloat over. A returning army of ten or more million young men eager to rip into the organized labor movement is, at its worst terms, a virtual guarantee of fascism, and even at its best can only injure the chief reliance of the demobilized soldier as a citizen of industry. Repressive anti-strike legislation, reinforced by jail sentences, will never work in a democracy. Success in enforcing such prohibitions is the first step in every totalitarian dictatorship. Drafting unwilling workers for industry is using slave labor. Lasting resentment by labor against the Democratic administration would be the surest possible way to bring about the victory of isolationists and

reactionaries in the next presidential election. An alliance of a middle class impoverished by inflation, a grasping and conservative agrarian movement and autocratic employers against industrial labor does not offer fertile soil for progressive democracy. Yet this is just what we approach as the cost of living rises, food pricing and rationing get out of control, and wartime strikes multiply.

The Elements of the Problem.—We have lately been so engrossed with the quarrels growing out of the economic problem that it is well to draw off a little and refresh our memories about its basic elements.

The first is that we are devoting more than half our working energies and productive equipment to making goods for war, which cannot be bought by individuals.

The second is that we as individuals are receiving just as much for producing all those goods as if we could buy them all. Taxation takes away part of the surplus money and bond-buying takes part, but there is a lot left in our pockets.

Income payments to individuals, according to the Department of Commerce, were in 1942 about 72 percent above the average for 1935-39. In 1941, before shortages of goods were much felt, income payments were only 37 percent above 1939, and 1941 was the year of largest civilian consumption on record. In the first five months of 1943 these income payments averaged *more than twice as large* as in the pre-war period.

As *The (London) Economist* writes in its issue of June 5, "The individual citizens of the United States have, in the aggregate, about \$3,000,000,000 more income, after taxation, every month than they had two years ago [in 1941]. Slightly more than \$1,000,000,000 a month is being mopped up in war savings bonds, leaving the enormous amount of about \$2,000,000,000 a month, or \$24,000,000,000 a year—considerably more than the whole pre-war British national income—as a net addition to potential purchasing power. . . . The plain truth is that no legislative or administrative mechanisms can dam up inflation if so great a head of liquid purchasing power is allowed to press against the dam."

What is there to buy with this money? No automobiles or tires, for most people, and precious little gasoline. No new houses and no new household equipment. Fewer and fewer people to hire as domestic servants or for other personal service, even by those who can afford it. We have garnered in most of the surplus stocks of things that can no longer be made. This tremendous buying pressure is now concentrated mostly on the markets for food and clothing. Can we wonder at scarcities, rising prices and black markets?

It is, of course, an inaccuracy to say that we have this money, if by "we" the reader understands each one of us. Those living on pensions, annuities, fixed governmental salaries or savings, white-collar workers

whose salaries have not been raised, wage-earners in non-war industries, and indeed many workers in war industries themselves have little more than they had before. The growth in the distributed income has come fully as much through increased employment as through wage boosts in the single pay envelope. Nevertheless it cannot be accounted for by distribution of profits, since dividends are smaller than in either 1940 or 1941. The bulk of the extra money has gone to industrial wage-earners and farmers. Total factory payrolls are now running *three times as large* as in 1939. While it is true that many a worker has no more to spend than seems to him necessary, it will not do for adherents of the labor movement to argue that the purchasing power in the hands of wage-earners, considered as a whole, is not an inflationary threat.

Congress has in its ineffable wisdom faced this situation by passing a hodgepodge tax bill, doing its best to cripple the price-control machinery, passing unworkable anti-strike legislation and deciding that no more can be done about fiscal policy to take effect this year.

Why Labor Strikes.—If industrial workers are receiving so much more than before the war, why do they strike for wage increases? It must be repeated here that one of the main reasons for the jump in labor's aggregate income is that there are so many more employed. Since there are nearly 70 percent more factory workers than in 1939, it is not fair to assume that each of them is getting three times as much as then. And there are many groups of workers who have not kept up with the procession.

But there is a more concrete reason than that. Wage rates have not risen extravagantly. The extra money earned by those who are earning it comes largely because they work extra hours. Other people get more for extra work, especially the companies which pay the wages, and their officials. Wage-earners know that the farmers are not only selling more food than ever before but are getting higher prices than since the last world war. So, when the purchasing power of the wages they are earning is cut by a rise in the cost of living, workers see no reason why they alone should carry the load. Most labor officials are reluctant to sanction strikes, but are sometimes forced by the rank and file.

When the cost of living had risen 15 percent above January, 1941, the War Labor Board, by the "Little Steel" formula, established the principle that wages might be increased by the same amount. At the same time a pledge was given that the rise in the cost of living would be stopped. According to official Labor Department figures, the cost of living is now 24 percent above January, 1941. But the War Labor Board has been instructed to "hold the line" of wages to the Little Steel formula. This amounts to a reduction in real earnings. The official cost-of-living index is, moreover, a national average, which in the personal knowl-

edge of many workers does not hold in their localities or in the stores at which they deal. And it does not apply to black markets, or take any account of the fact that often desired foods are not obtainable at any price.

The woods are full of profiteers and chiselers, and everybody knows it. Unions, in a period of shortage of workers, have the economic power to win strikes and are held back only by virtuous self-restraint. No such restraint is being shown by farm organizations or politicians or profiteers or rationing violators. Employers, when asked for increases, consistently pass the buck to the War Labor Board and the administration. It is little wonder that labor's self-restraint sometimes runs thin.

Wage-earners may not understand that, now that nearly everyone has enough money to buy good food, there is not enough of it to go round, even though the country is producing more than ever. No conceivable wage increase will enlarge the total of food in the stores. If the present purchasing power of wages has been a powerful factor in increasing its price, higher pay spent for food will merely boost prices even more.

But what people outside the labor movement often overlook is that however strictly we may have to ration the use of money, labor is entitled to the money it earns. The government does not refuse to pay manufacturers or farmers for the extra goods they produce, just because the manufacturers or farmers may in consequence have a surplus of purchasing power. In a system of free enterprise we cannot treat labor alone as if this were a socialized economy. We can limit monopolistic gains. We can tax, we can borrow and we can ration. But we cannot confine the workers to a money wage just sufficient to buy the available amount of commodities, while we allow business, farmers and others to make profits and lay aside surpluses.

This matter has a direct bearing on the post-war situation. If our factories and farms are to operate at full capacity when war production ceases, wage-earners must have the purchasing power to buy a large part of what they can produce. They must have their full share of the national income; indeed, as production and income increase, they must have a larger proportion than previously, if we are not to risk oversaving. But if during the war their money rewards are held stationary while those of employers and farmers increase, they will be heavily handicapped at the start.

The situation then is this: as long as the national money income is increasing, labor will demand, and ought to be granted, its share of that money. But neither labor nor any other group in the community ought to *spend* more money than will suffice to buy the available goods at existing prices. Taxation is not taking away the surplus cash. Voluntary loans are not taking it away. If we could find a means of storing up this extra cash for the use of its recipients after the war, we should not need to fear the inflationary effect of

any wage increase that may be justifiable on other grounds.

What Is to Be Done?—The obvious answer to this dilemma—an answer made long ago by those who know enough to add and subtract figures even though they run into the billions—is compulsory loans sufficient to relieve the inflationary pressure. Such loans should of course be graduated, like income taxes, according to ability to pay. But Secretary Morgenthau and Congress between them have blocked this remedy until it is too late.

Congress will not adopt any new fiscal legislation in time to go into effect before next January. Under the leadership of a Republican Party and a Southern Democratic faction more intent upon opposing the President than winning either the war or the peace, it can be expected to stimulate inflation rather than to stop it, even then.

Meanwhile the crisis is upon us. If the rise in the cost of living is to be halted, if the white-collar classes and those dependent upon fixed incomes are to be saved from threatened penury, if strikes are to be averted and if bitter domestic quarrels are to be nipped in the bud, a way must be found to do what is necessary which does not depend on the good will or the good sense of the congressional saboteurs. This is a challenge to democratic statesmanship: it must if it can reach down into the sources of democracy and obtain the acceptance, on a voluntary but collective basis, of a comprehensive plan.

Such a plan, if ably drafted and presented, might win acceptance from practical, working representatives of labor, employers and farmers. It would have to pledge even-handed justice at the same time to all important elements in the community. It would have to avoid like the plague interference by those who have political axes to grind.

Its elements could be essentially simple. They might be summarized briefly as follows:

1. Wage-earners and white-collar workers, organized and unorganized as well, are to receive wage increases equivalent to the rise in the cost of living since January 1, 1941, if such increases have not already been granted. Further increases to match any subsequent rise in the cost of living are to be allowed. This does not bar out such additional wage increase as may be necessary to correct substandard living conditions.

2. As a condition of the acceptance of this policy, labor's pledge not to strike is to be strictly observed, and unions will discipline their own members for any violations, with such help as is necessary by employers and government.

3. Any wage or salary payments in excess of those received January 1, 1941, are to be paid in the form of war savings bonds. These bonds are not to be cashed until the war is over. Increases to correct substand-

ard living conditions are to be exempt from this requirement.

4. The government is to purchase for the armed forces, and for civilian distribution also if necessary, food at such wholesale prices that no rise in present retail ceiling prices will be required. Higher wholesale prices will be paid only in those cases in which subsidies are regarded as necessary to increase production or maintain channels of distribution, and when funds are legally available to pay them.

5. Industrial corporations, farmers and other non-employees are pledged to buy war bonds with any part of their net incomes which is larger than that received January 1, 1941. Voluntary machinery will

be set up to assist in making this practice universal.

6. The government binds itself to stand behind these undertakings to the full extent of its power, and especially to improve food administration, rationing and price control.

Such a compact, if it could be adopted by an unofficial congress of the interests at stake, would show our real capacity for democratic self-government. Americans like to think they can do necessary things without waiting for someone to pass a law. In this case they cannot afford to wait for Congress. Congress has failed, and we shall have to do the best we can without it. Perhaps we can set it an example.

GEORGE SOULE

The Flag-Salute Case

THE GOBITIS CHILDREN can now go back to public school in Minersville, Pennsylvania, without having to salute the American flag. The eight-to-one Supreme Court decision which three years ago sanctioned their exclusion is now reversed by a vote of six to three in *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette*. Mr. Justice Frankfurter dissents in a nineteen-page opinion in which the dominant and sustained note is that of the duty of judicial deference to the judgment of the legislature. This note would have come with more power had not its sponsor voted to condemn on constitutional grounds an ordinance forbidding picketing on the sidewalk and an injunction issued by a chancellor against such picketing. It would seem that Mr. Justice Frankfurter must see a significant constitutional difference between forbidding picketing and requiring the flag salute as a condition of attending public schools or else he must design his latest pronouncement as a recantation or qualification of his earlier overriding of legislative judgment.

Justices Roberts and Reed do not join in Mr. Justice Frankfurter's opinion, possibly because of some expressions of a personal nature, but they dissent from the decision with the simple announcement that they adhere to the views expressed by the Court in the *Gobitis* Case. The *Gobitis* opinion was written by Mr. Justice Frankfurter, and the reasons which he there gave for sustaining the school-imposed flag salute are dealt with in detail in Mr. Justice Jackson's opinion for the Court in the *Barnette* Case. The frame of the *Barnette* opinion is largely that of a dissent from the *Gobitis* opinion.

In the interim between the two cases, Justices Black, Douglas and Murphy had announced that they had become convinced that they erred in their earlier vote to sustain the flag-salute order, and they now write independently of their change of view, putting somewhat more emphasis on the religious aspect of the problem

than does Mr. Justice Jackson. This triple defection would not have been enough by itself to overturn the earlier case. The reversal came with the aid of Justices Jackson and Rutledge, who for the first time participated in the Supreme Court's consideration of the issue.

The fact that thirteen other members of the Supreme Court in prior cases have at one time or another treated the flag-salute requirement as constitutional is invoked by Mr. Justice Frankfurter in support of his dissent. This invocation he follows by saying that "The Court has no reason for existence if it merely reflects the pressures of the day." Whatever implication or innuendo there may be in this is not wholly negated by the succeeding statement that "Our system is built on the faith that men set apart for this special function, freed from the influences of immediacy and from the deflections of worldly ambition, will become able to take a view of longer range than the period of responsibility entrusted to Congress and legislatures."

It seldom furthers enlightenment on the substantive issue to impugn, in however veiled and backhanded fashion, the motives or the capacities of those with whom one disagrees. Reversals of judicial judgment are not a complete novelty or always without merit, as the dissenting opinion recognizes when it says: "But I believe that never before has this Court changed its views so as to restrict the powers of democratic government. Always heretofore, it has withdrawn narrow views of legislative authority so as to authorize what formerly it had denied."

This is far from true as a matter of fact. Not only is there the record of the Taft Court in the field of taxation, but there is the later expansion of judicial censorship both of legislative censorship and of state criminal procedures. Nevertheless one may cherish the ideal that judicial recantation should always be in favor of sustaining legislation, however much it may have been dishonored in the breach. Its dishonoring in the pres-

ent instance is brought to bear on the most fundamental of issues by the paragraph which follows:

In view of this history it must be plain that what thirteen Justices found to be within the constitutional authority of a state, legislators cannot be deemed unreasonable in enacting. Therefore, in denying to the states what heretofore has received such impressive judicial sanction, some other tests of unconstitutionality must surely be guiding the Court than the absence of a rational justification for the legislation. But I know of no other test which this Court is authorized to apply in nullifying legislation.

This invites analysis. The *ad hominem* invocation of "impressive legal sanction" seems to assume that the thirteen Justices stamped their personal commendation on the legislation by not invalidating it, an inference which Mr. Justice Frankfurter denies for himself in his insistence that the judicial function is limited to determining whether there is a rational justification for the state action. On such an issue, judges as well as others may differ, and judges as well as others may revise their initial judgment. They may even give weight to adverse professional and editorial response to their earlier acquiescence, without warranting any suspicion of seeking favor with the multitude for any reason whatsoever, selfish or otherwise.

It therefore does not follow that the reversal of judicial judgment on the flag-salute issue is the product of any other test of constitutionality than that which Mr. Justice Frankfurter invokes. His is the view of judicial review that in a season not long past was widely acclaimed by dissenting Justices and by those who favored the ameliorating social legislation of the time. It has been the profession reiterated in Supreme Court opinions, often when it seemed to be least translated into practice. Yet always the criteria of constitutional adjudication have involved the weighing of competing considerations and often the rejection of the policy preferred by legislatures. Judicial tolerance, if carried to the extreme of the postulates in its favor, would mean the denial of constitutionally secured civil liberties. Somewhere the line has to be drawn, as Mr. Justice Frankfurter has recognized in cases where he has condemned or joined in condemnation. He would draw it here if he believed the law before him to be akin to the suppression of freedom of utterance.

The crux of his particularistic difference with the majority appears in the following paragraph:

The flag-salute exercise has no kinship whatever to the oath tests so odious in history. For the oath test was one of the instruments for suppressing heretical beliefs. Saluting the flag suppresses no belief nor curbs it. Children and their parents may believe what they please, avow their belief and practise it. It is not even remotely suggested that the requirement for saluting the flag involves the slightest restriction against the fullest opportunity on the part both of the children and of their parents to disavow as publicly as

they choose to do so the meaning that others attach to the gesture of salute. All channels of affirmative free expression are open to both children and parents. Had we before us any act of the state putting the slightest curbs upon such free expression, I should not lag behind any member of this Court in striking down such an invasion of the right to freedom of thought and freedom of speech protected by the Constitution.

This misses the point of the conscientious objection to the flag salute. The children cannot by any affirmative statement cure the infirmity of the flag salute for them. To disavow in words what it means to others is largely beside the point, even if this includes avowal of what it means to them. Their belief is that they must refrain from the flag salute in obedience to an injunction against idolatry, and such is their conforming practice. They can hardly cherish freedom to avow their belief if in practice they are coerced to traduce it. Freedom to practise their belief is denied if the flag salute is compulsory. Only if they are wholly free to refrain without consequent disabilities have they a full measure of freedom to practise their belief. If on the basis of a rational ideal of liberty, distinctions are to be drawn between what Mr. Justice Frankfurter would condemn and what he would condone, it is hard to reject the judgment of Mr. Justice Jackson that "It would seem that involuntary affirmation could be commanded only on more immediate and urgent grounds than silence."

While the paragraph last quoted speaks of the requirement to salute the flag, perhaps it should be read in the light of the earlier dissenting insistence that "All that is in question is the right of the State to compel participation in this exercise by those who choose to attend the public schools." To any reliance on a special public power over public schools, the majority opinion answers that "Free public education, if faithful to the ideal of secular instruction and political neutrality, will not be partisan or enemy of any class, creed, party or faction." To this the dissent replies by posing various other academic rituals that may give rise to objections based on religious or political grounds which, it suggests, the Court certainly cannot be called upon to evaluate in order to choose between constitutional rejection or sanction.

The official disputants disagree, too, upon the distinction between requiring students in state universities to participate in military training, which the Court sanctions, and requiring school children to participate in the flag ceremony. Mr. Justice Jackson is technically in error in saying that "In the present case attendance is not optional." It is settled that students need not go to public schools if they go to suitable other schools. The opportunity, however, is not always available. We shall now never know whether the Court would have condemned compulsion in private schools had it continued to sustain it in public schools. Mr. Justice Frank-

furter, without drawing explicit conclusions therefrom, quotes some general statements from an earlier Supreme Court opinion, pointing to limitations on state power over private schools, and he might condemn the ceremonial requirement in private schools notwithstanding the duty of judicial deference to legislative judgment, and notwithstanding justifications which he has advanced for that judgment. However this all might have been, attendance at a state university is certainly voluntary, and for the requirement of military training there Mr. Justice Jackson invokes the additional justification of the "power of the State to raise militia and impose the duties of service therein upon its citizens."

This gives enough of the argumentation to show that the constitutional and judicial issue is not so simple as some zealots might lead one to infer. Those who would have a court condemn everything that they detest must recognize that they invoke a standard of judicial conduct that they have roundly condemned when practised against what they desire. They may narrow their contention by noting with Mr. Justice Jackson that "The freedom asserted by these respondents does not bring them into collision with rights asserted by any other individual." They may, in view of the explicitness of the First Amendment now incorporated into the Fourteenth, put civil liberties on a more exalted plane than all others. They will then object most pointedly to Mr. Justice Frankfurter's seeming refusal to do so when he denies any difference of degree in the duty of judicial deference to legislative judgment "depending upon the nature of the challenge to the legislation."

In a purely formal sense it may be quite accurate to say that "The Constitution does not give us greater veto power when dealing with one phase of 'liberty' than with another"; but it denies the whole history of judicial review to imply that there is no hierarchy of individual and social interests which is of constitutional concern. As the greater public exigency in time of war may warrant unusually drastic interference with both liberty and property, so are there particular freedoms so deeply cherished and so part and parcel of the professions and the strivings of the hard ascent from barbarism that their curtailment demands justification by a higher and more immediate public need than is required for invasions of interests of lesser moment.

Such valuing and comparing has been of the essence of judicial application of constitutional constraints. It is the underlying canon of the majority's attribution of high constitutional concern for freedom to refrain from expression as well as for freedom of utterance and of worship. Mr. Justice Frankfurter's feeling for a judicial duty of equal deference to legislative judgments whatever the interests and the ideals at stake points strongly in the direction of legislative absolutism.

There is undoubtedly much truth in his concluding thought that "It is self-delusive to believe that the liberal spirit can be enforced by judicial invalidation of illiberal legislation." Perhaps it would have been as well if we had never looked to courts as guardians of a spiritual sanctuary. Mr. Justice Frankfurter's plea for well-nigh complete judicial abdication comes from him with the greater force when applied to restraints which he as an individual has most zealously striven to lift or to prevent. Doubtless he will be misunderstood by those who do not make or do not regard the distinction between the judicial and the personal attitude on which he insists. To some of this misunderstanding he may contribute by details of his argumentation subordinate to his main theme. For he cannot refrain from differentiations and evaluations while insisting that they are beyond his province. His philosophy of judicial restraint does not extend to restraint of debating zeal which carries him farther than he needs to go and perhaps farther than he really means to go.

To spasmodic excess of zeal rather than to anything more fundamental must doubtless be attributed such occasional examples of intricate blundering in analysis and reasoning as have been noted. Argumentative ineptitudes may be merely superfluous frail props for a conclusion thoroughly well bottomed on other grounds. They are not necessarily the propelling forces leading to the conclusion. They need not drag the judgment with them in their own collapse. Yet if sufficiently numerous and serious, they may rob the position taken of the support of esoteric or technical considerations and leave the question one on which wise laymen may claim as much intellectual authority as members of the bar or bench.

The opinion of the Court in the *Barnette Case* might have been stronger had it not been so preponderantly devoted to answering the arguments which Mr. Justice Frankfurter made earlier for the Court in sustaining the flag-salute requirement in the *Gobitis Case*. This destructive polemic was not a difficult task, and it was done with entire adequacy by Mr. Justice Jackson. One of the important points in his opinion for the Court is that the liberty here given constitutional sanction is not confined to cases where the objections to compulsion to participate in ceremonials are based on religious grounds. The freedom of silence and the freedom of abstention extend to those who have other than religious objections to compulsion of public avowals. Subject to certain exceptions, notably in military service, the opinion concludes that "If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion or other matters of opinion or force citizens to confess by word or act their faith therein."

THOMAS REED POWELL

Washington Notes

Devil's Advocate

WASHINGTON IS FILLED with rumors these days that the State Department is undergoing a change of heart. Gossip says that President Roosevelt is unhappy about the long continued political brawl in North Africa, and that this has strengthened the hands of those in the department who never liked the policy but were powerless to do anything about it.

As a sign of the changed intentions, Washington gossip points to two recent transfers within the department. Ray Atherton, acting chief of the European Division, is to be Minister to Canada. Loy Henderson, assistant chief of the same division, will fill the newly created post of Minister to Irak. Technically both these transfers are called promotions; but in fact, they mean that two men who have been making policy will do so no longer. Both of them are closely associated with the appeasement of Vichy, the deal with Darlan (although that was initiated by the army) and the policy of supporting Giraud against de Gaulle and retaining French Vichyites and other fascists in important posts in North Africa.

Whether the department has actually changed its course notably, remains to be seen. But it is probably true that criticism of it has lately become somewhat sharper than the facts justify. The habit of assuming that the department can do no right has become so confirmed that it produces some overexcited reading and listening matter. Should the department tomorrow produce a White Paper designed to prove that the Nazis were the aggressors in this war, at least a half-dozen newspaper columnists and radio commentators would have to restrain their reflexes not to turn out pieces contending that the Nazis were no such thing. It is hard to recall when any scapegoat has been called upon to carry such a burden of scorn. The load is piled up both from the Right and the Left—by liberal commentators on one hand and *The New York Herald Tribune* on the other.

Just what is meant by the State Department is not ordinarily made clear. Rightist critics tend to exempt Secretary Hull from criticism on the theory that he would be "sound" if left to his own devices but is a victim of White House meddling. Leftist critics are disposed to throw Hull into the witch's brew along with the toads but to assume that President Roosevelt himself is no part of the foul ingredients. To both sides the rotten heart of the department is its career personnel, the so-called cookie-pushers who are assumed to control policy by sly finagling on the administrative level. They are represented variously as brainless social butterflies, slugs in striped pants and fascists of Machiavellian cunning.

Yet they can't be all these things at the same time. Quite obviously, the time has come when the devil needs an advocate. It must be admitted by such an advocate at the outset that the department is cluttered in some places of importance with second-raters and with otherwise first-raters of limited social vision. Having done this much, the advo-

cate can point to some first-raters men. Sumner Welles, while no flaming social reformer, has grown with his responsibilities and may not, as of today, be dismissed either as a cookie-pusher or as a man of ill will. There are few more consistent liberals in America, perhaps, than Lawrence Duggan. No apologies need be offered for Dean Acheson either. As for Adolf Berle, people perhaps forget too hastily that he was one of the original group of brain-trusters and did yeoman service in that capacity. Before that, he was one of the most trenchant and effective critics of the excesses of private capitalism. The book on which he collaborated, describing the power and organization of the modern corporation, has never been superseded (*"The Modern Corporation and Private Property,"* by A. A. Berle and G. C. Means, 1932).

The assumption that President Roosevelt's designs are constantly blockaded or gummed up by the State Department's careerists is, of course, a convenient fiction. The President is to an amazing extent his own super-Secretary of State. All important foreign policies either are his own or receive his approval before they are put into effect. The President sometimes hides behind the State Department when the dead cats fly, just as he sometimes hides behind other departments and agencies. He feels that he is justified in doing so; he is the force that holds this liberal administration together and his force should never be unnecessarily weakened in time of crisis.

America's record in the Spanish civil war, always cited as the classic example of State Department dunderheadedness or venality, and with some justice in the light of subsequent events, was more certainly a record made in the President's own handwriting. Just why it was done as it was, is anyone's guess. No one who reads it carefully can leave out of consideration the President's sensitivity to Catholic opinion in this country, the fact that he needed, or thought he needed, solid support from the urban political machines of the North to put his domestic-reform program into effect and the circumstance that he was preoccupied with this program at the time of the Spanish war. These are mitigating conditions, if not valid excuses, so far as he is concerned. To leave them out and throw all the blame on the State Department is to distort the picture.

The department is left in a peculiarly defenseless position much of the time for two reasons: first it buffers the White House and has no choice but to do so; second, its own defense, when there is one, often rests in wartime on a foundation of confidential semi-military information.

An example is the vexed North African question, as to which many important facts are still held to be military or diplomatic secrets. Spokesmen for the State Department insist that when the whole story is told, the department's role will seem a good deal better than it now appears to unfriendly critics. They do not impugn the character of de Gaulle himself, except to make the familiar challenge that he is egotistical and stubborn; but they are pretty harsh about some of the men who are behind him. Any real discussion, however, of the State Department's policy, in the sense of a "white paper" defending what has been done, is still a long way off. In the meantime, no doubt opinion will continue to divide in the future pretty much as it has in the past.

Washington

T. R. B.

The Great White Way

HOLLYWOOD's latest example of segregation, "Cabin in the Sky," is the usual religious-comic handout that is given the Negro by a white studio whose last thought is to make a movie that is actually about Negroes. This is like trying to make a Christmas tree by bringing together all the tinsel, lights and candy canes you can lay your hands on but leaving out the tree itself. "Cabin in the Sky" misses the heart of the idea, although it is played solidly by Negroes, and has all the guaranteed (by white men) Negro-folk fixtures from Heaven and Hell walking around in pants to Hall Johnson Choir music. There is going to be no movie made about the Negro until one is made about him in relation to the rest of the country of which he composes ten percent. His blues, dress, his whole attitude, do not exist in a vacuum but have meaning only as they are seen inside the society that made them.

"Cabin in the Sky" first cuts itself off from everything white and then constructs a niggertown—out of jimcrack architecture, stage grass and magnolia trees—to look like Paradise. In this state of unreality the only course is to fill the movie with God's messengers and make the struggle one between Heaven and Hell for the hero's soul. In the midst of this, the story line is no different from the more superficial movies made about white people. The wife loses her husband to the charmer and wins him back again, the approach being from the snickering, genteel side of sex. The characters are merely tags marked "Gambler," "Temptress," "Wife," which is what you have left after you have stripped the character of all emotions and qualities that would arouse comparison, perplexity, feelings of inferiority or admiration in a white audience. The preacher in this movie is just about what the Tuesday-afternoon bridge club would like for a Negro preacher—a broad-shouldered, clean-cut young man with perfect manners, clothes, and a suitably unprofound religion, a man who is not too much a Negro because he has all the manners of a white man. Compare him with the Negro in "The Oxbow Incident," whose presence bespeaks a life that has endured much hatred and violence, and whose religion, by forgiving everything, has become a mysticism beyond the understanding of the townspeople. Moreover, the visual quality of this man has a roughness, irregularity and unprettiness that I have seen achieved so well and in the same spirit by two Negro painters, Horace Pippin and Jacob Lawrence.

Hollywood, in its position of greatest public influencer, solidifies racial prejudice to an enormous degree by its "Cabins in the Sky," which are an insidious way of showing the Negro his place. The all-Negro film is no less Jim Crow than a bus where whites sit in front and Negroes in back, because the film is owned, operated and directed by whites, even to the song writers. (The story that is always going to be written by Duke Ellington is always tripped up somewhere and never gets written.) On the surface a whitewash, but really a stab in the back, these religio-comic treatments rob the Negro of a self and a place, relieve the whites of any necessity to realize that the Negro is really a person who lives next door, goes to work on the same bus to the same factory in Detroit. (Even the

place society has given him inside the noose of a lynching party is given to whites in the anti-lynching movies.) Hollywood, in sound treatments of Negroes like those in "The Oxbow Incident" and "Bataan," has shown maturity and intelligence, but it will have truly merited respect only when it brings out a movie where the central figures are Negroes living in a white majority.

The one value of all-Negro films lies in giving Negro artists an outlet for their talents. And the one value of "Cabin in the Sky" is the talent of Rochester, Lena Horne and Louis Armstrong, irrespective of anything in the movie script. Rochester gives just the right emphasis to his innocence and guilt and tops everything with his wonderful dance concocted out of a minimum of movement. Lena Horne, despite her voice, has some truly marvelous equipment and ability to use it, and Louis Armstrong, without his trumpet and song, is still at home. Their offerings are well turned decorations on something which is a stale insult, cheap, and growing daily less innocuous.

The tragic fact is that the Negro artists are in no position to bargain with Hollywood, because if they refuse to play in bad movies they only bring Hollywood closer to its goal, as shown in "Cabin in the Sky"—the complete negation of the Negro in American society. As long as Americans accept the all-Negro film, it is obvious that they can take it or leave it, and Hollywood is more than willing to leave it.

MANNY FARBER

News of Science

IT MAY BE RECALLED that several months ago two new anti-bacterial drugs, penicillin and gramicidin, were discussed in this column. At that time both drugs were very much in the experimental stage and such comments as were made on their possible clinical value were largely speculation based on results which had been achieved in the test tube. Clinical experiments have now been carried out on a much larger scale so that it becomes timely to review them again in the light of more recent experience.

Unfortunately it is still necessary to dismiss gramicidin as only a hopeful possibility for the future. This substance, which was isolated by Dr. René Dubos of the Rockefeller Institute from a certain species of soil bacterium, exhibited in the test tube a most remarkable anti-bacterial action. Even when diluted by a figure that ran into the millions, it completely prevented the growth of many disease-causing organisms. However, animal tests early revealed that when injected into the blood or tissues it was highly poisonous. Since adequate absorption is a prerequisite of any drug which is to act effectively on an internal disease process, the use of gramicidin for the majority of germ-caused disease was ruled out by this fact alone. Fortunately, however, gramicidin was found not to be absorbed, at least to any detectable extent, from such raw surfaces as result from wounds or ulcers. On this basis it seemed possible that it might prove of value in the treatment of various types of ulcerations, in wounds, operative or accidental, or in abscess cavities which failed to heal—in short, in every situation in which the infected tissues could be reached directly from the surface. In isolated instances the results which have been obtained from this usage have

been dramatic but, in general, the effects of such local application may best be described as equivocal. In fairness both to Dr. Dubos and his brainchild, gramicidin, it must be admitted that clinical experimentation has not yet gone sufficiently far to warrant a conclusive verdict, but, excluding some startling new development, gramicidin seems unlikely to play a large part in medicine of the future.

In vivid contrast the second of these anti-bacterial substances, penicillin, has with almost lightning rapidity shot into the front ranks of therapeutic agents, perhaps even to the displacement of the sulfonamides from their exalted position. Indeed, so startling have the clinical results been that in order to avoid engendering false hopes it should be said that the drug is not yet generally available either to the public or to the medical profession and there is little hope of adequate supplies for some time to come.

Penicillin (pronounced, incidentally, with a soft *c* and the accent on the third syllable) is so named because it is produced by the fungus, *Penicillium notatum*. The drug was originally discovered in 1929 by Professor Alexander Fleming in St. Mary's Hospital in London. Dr. Fleming happened to observe that when a mixed growth of this particular mold and various species of germs were grown together on a culture plate the bacterial colonies kept at a safe distance from the fungus. From this observation he deduced that the mold must exude some substance inimical to the well being of bacteria. By growing the fungus on a somewhat larger scale he demonstrated not only the truth of this inference but that the substance concerned was far more potent than any bactericide previously uncovered. His difficulty, which finally proved so insuperable as to lead him to abandon his research, lay in the fact that he was unable to extract penicillin in anything like pure form.

This catastrophic ending to a brilliant piece of research was eventually retrieved in 1940 by a group of scientists working at Oxford University under a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. Laboring under such handicaps as only a state of war can impose, this group succeeded, despite all obstacles, in isolating penicillin in solid though still somewhat impure form. This chemical triumph was rapidly overshadowed by the astonishing clinical success which came hard upon its heels. In the main, first experiments were confined to patients suffering from suppurative disease which had proved resistant to sulfonamides and which by all known standards might be deemed hopeless. Injection of penicillin into the veins of these patients not only proved entirely harmless but brought about astonishing improvement in their clinical condition. Unfortunately, although many of these previously hopeless cases rallied to the point at which recovery might have been expected, supplies of penicillin proved inadequate even for the cautious dosage which was being employed.

In the autumn of 1941, Professor Howard W. Florey, who had occupied a leading position in this penicillin research, visited the United States. As part of his itinerary he visited the Peoria Laboratory of the United States Department of Agriculture, where subsequent studies have revealed many of the growth characteristics of the mold and have gone a long way toward further purification of the active substance. However, even more important was the fact that Florey's visit succeeded in interesting potential manufacturers in the production of penicillin for clinical trial.

Outstanding among these manufacturers has been Merck and Company, Inc., of Rahway, New Jersey, which has not only produced sizable quantities of the drug but has greatly developed its method of production.

With the entry of the United States into war, supplies of penicillin for clinical trial came under government control. Dr. Chester Keefer, acting under the aegis of the Committee on Medical Research, was appointed to supervise the distribution of the drug for medical investigation. Under his guiding hand extensive experimentation has been conducted, the details of which are still largely undisclosed. However, it is now obvious that penicillin is a discovery of as great importance as that of the sulfonamides.

In general, penicillin is effective against the same disease germs as are the sulfonamides and is approximately as rapid in action. It should be added that whereas the sulfonamides are at their best in the early invasive stages of disease, penicillin seems more or less indifferent to the stage to which the infective process has progressed. Furthermore, while the action of the sulfonamides is neutralized by the presence of pus, the effect of penicillin seems undisturbed either by its presence or absence, and hence it can be used effectively in many cases, such as deep-lying bone abscess, in which the use of the sulfonamides would be futile. Like the sulfonamides, penicillin can be applied locally to diseased tissue with the additional advantage that, unlike the sulfa-drugs, in cases of meningitis it can be injected with safety directly into the fluid surrounding the spinal cord. Used directly on ulcers, on infected fingers, in septic wounds, penicillin has produced results which leave no doubt as to its superlative efficacy. Moreover, from present indications it appears that penicillin will be effective against a wider variety of bacteria than the sulfonamides and will prove an effective agent in most varieties of sepsis, in pneumonia, gonorrhea and certain forms of meningitis.

The bugbear that has now to be fought is underproduction. Army and navy hospitals are absorbing present supplies and could utilize many times the quantity they are now taking. With present methods of production, it seems unlikely that adequate supplies for civilian use will be available for months or possibly years. Synthesis of the drug seems at the present time remote, but there is hope to be found in the fact that manufacturers are engaged in a race against time and against one another in attaining this objective, the achievement of which would almost certainly bring the drug within the reach of the practising physician.

The Bandwagon

After the Dorothy Thompson-Maxim Kopf wedding, the happy newlyweds invited their friends to their home, for the wedding dinner. After dinner, all of them joined in a discussion of post-war reconstruction. The groom, a distinguished artist, then entertained in tights, doing a one-man wrestling act. — *Leonard Lyons in The New York Post.*

A tempest broke loose, though, when one of them [drunk suspects] quit mumbling in what sounded like a foreign language and suddenly cried in pure English, "Heil Hitler!" and followed through with a Nazi salute. — *The Los Angeles Times.*

Captain Emmet said trainees formerly were allowed liberty after they had been at the station for a few weeks, but that the practice had been discontinued. Life at the station, the commander said, has been made so interesting that the recruits do not miss "going ashore."—*A story on the Great Lakes Naval Training Station in The Chicago Tribune.*

Amen!

A congressional recess this summer, Representative Woodrum (D., Va.) told the House, not only would aid the physical welfare of the lawmakers but would contribute to the mental ease of the public.—*AP dispatch from Washington.*

That All-Out Effort

ORIENTAL AND OCCIDENTAL CULTURES CONTRASTED. By Cheng Che-yu. . . . How to win the war and the peace by analyzing the cultural elements of the Orient and the Occident.—*From The New York Sunday Times Book Review.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column; \$1 will be paid for each item used. Address Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. Please enclose the original clipping.—THE EDITORS

Correspondence

Catholic Clericalism v. Catholicism

SIR: I am taken aback to observe in your issue of May 3 that a religious leader so liberal-minded as the Rev. John Haynes Holmes should take such belligerent issue with the measured statements of the late George P. West on the political aspects of Roman Catholic activities in this country ["The Catholic Issue," *The New Republic*, March 1].

It seems to me that Dr. Holmes does Mr. West and your own worthy journal an injury when, by the strongest kind of implication, he accuses both of you of stirring up suspicion, preaching hatred and attacking the loyalty of Catholics. I feel sure that when he has thought this out a little more adequately he will acknowledge his error. . . .

Dr. Holmes's main difficulty is his failure to distinguish between clerical—and therefore political—Catholicism, and the spiritual Catholicism which is the heritage of the millions of good Catholics who do not take their politics from their clergy.

I should have thought that Dr. Holmes's own familiarity with history and contemporary events would have informed him that in Catholic countries the great mass of Catholics themselves have been the ones who have led the battle against that form of political activity within their church known as clericalism. In the United States, which is dominantly non-Catholic, the clerical group and its press tries to head off opposition both within and without the Church by branding it as Protestant bigotry and/or anti-Catholicism. . . .

I have been startled, while traveling in various parts of Europe, to observe the intensity of opposition to clericalism on the part of Catholic populations. . . . In the Duchy of Luxemburg . . . I found a fiercely militant and effective anti-clerical party which had gone so far as to debar priests from access to the schools even for the teaching of religion, on the grounds that the priests misused their privilege to engage in propaganda and in political activities.

Such curbs placed on their politically acting clergy by Catholic populations may perhaps fit in with Dr. Holmes's conception of the best controlling the worst. But they do not constitute anti-Catholicism.

In the meantime there are many citizens in this country who, quite apart from considerations of their own religion or another's, are alarmed by the pronouncements and actions of the Roman Catholic clergy and press. These citizens, observing the bold thrusts against the most cherished and fundamental principles of the American way, the denials of the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people, the sneers at American liberalism and—what is most serious—the political maneuvers to enforce such views, on the part of that group, have no other recourse but to fight for that which they cherish. . . . How can the United States of America possibly be divided by fighting for those principles by which . . . the country is unified?

Dr. Holmes recognizes that the Roman Catholic Church may become a great danger. Therein he goes farther than myself. The danger lies, not in the Church, but in the misdirection of authority and power within it. . . .

Now as to Dr. Holmes's statement that the Pope and the Church have utterly repudiated Hitlerism—I fear such an assertion is hardly a critical one. Here let it merely be noted that the Vatican and the German prelates were still trying to make deals with Hitler long after the democracies were at war with him. That their opposition was born when they could no longer talk terms. That its causes are very different from those which inform democracy's battle. That these two sets of opposition to Hitlerism do not move along parallel lines. That democracy's opposition to Hitlerism is, by its nature, implacable, while that of the Vatican, by its nature, is not.

Charlottesville, Va.

LAWRENCE FERNSWORTH

T. S. Eliot's Title

SIR: I suppose umpty hundred other persons have also, by now, offered Mr. Cowley comment on his puzzlement with the title of Eliot's "Four Quartets" [*The New Republic*, June 7]. If you are acquainted with Beethoven's last quartets, Op. 127, 130, 131, 132 and 135, you might see a possible source for his title. These Beethoven quartets are "the voice of one person," they are intensely personal, even "mystical" to those who can find such stuff in music; have an unusual structure for string quartets—i. e., usually five movements instead of the classical four, one movement intensely lyrical like the Part IV lyrics of Eliot (one Beethoven movement is a "Cavatina," one a "song of thanksgiving," etc.) and so on. Lots of the poems puzzle me, too, but the title seems obvious.

Pittsburgh, Pa.

WILSON S. BORLAND

From The New Republic Mail Bag

Miss Marguerite Pohek of New York City writes us objecting to Dr. Wertham's review of "Mind, Medicine and Man" by Gregory Zilboorg, which appeared in our May 24 issue. Miss Pohek claims that Dr. Wertham has misrepresented Dr. Zilboorg on several points, such as the relationship of the individual to society, and the nature of the feudal period. Contrary to Dr. Wertham's claim, writes Miss Pohek, Dr. Zilboorg does not regard the relationship of the individual to society as if "each were an independent self-contained entity."

We have received a copy of the tri-monthly French review, *Renaissance*, published by L'École Libre des Hautes Études in New York City, and would like to express our commendation of the high quality of its contents, and our gratitude for the contribution to American thought which the French writers and intellectuals of Renaissance are making.

Whatever value the Cabinet form of government may have in helping the President to control Congress, Robert Adair Black, of Cincinnati, would still prefer to keep our present form of government intact.

Books in Review

Poet of This War

ALMOST the only poems that are truly of this war are those written by Louis Aragon. Most of the others, so far, have shown one of two antithetical faults. Either they are illiterate—that is, written without any feeling for literary values, flatly, inaccurately and often insincerely; or else they are tortured into shapelessness by literary doubts and reservations. To make matters worse, neither the highbrow nor the lowbrow poets have had anything much to say. There are a few exceptions, some of them as noteworthy as Karl Shapiro in three or four of the poems that he has sent back from the South Pacific. We shall find that there are other poets of this war when more of the English and the Americans have something else to write about than what they seem to regard as the intolerable dullness of army camps. But so far it is a Frenchman who has managed to speak for the soldiers of the United Nations.

Aragon's poems are written in a variety of forms, with great technical inventiveness and with occasional echoes of Baudelaire, Apollinaire and provincial folksongs. The language combines the slang of barrack-rooms with the diction of the French Academy. The rhymes are so involved that Aragon had to defend them in an essay. Sometimes they run over from the end of one line to the beginning of the next—thus, the river Ourcq, for which there is no legitimate rhyme in French, is coupled with *amour Qui*, the "Qui" being the first word of the following line. In English we might use the same system to invent a rhyme for the supposedly unrhymable orange: "Neither an *orange*, nor citron *nor angelica*." But I don't think we should be much nearer to writing great poetry, and I am just as well satisfied when Rolfe Humphries, in translating several of these poems, omits most of the rhymes entirely.

The point I am making is that, on the technical side, Aragon seems to be allied with those intellectual poets who have tried to describe the war, but have usually ended by expressing only their own bewilderment and self-pity. His emotions, on the other hand, are as simple and straightforward as those of the popular poets. He is not ashamed to be afraid, to weep heartbrokenly or to love his wife and his country. Looking at the events before his eyes, instead of looking into a mirror, he tells us what he saw and felt behind the Maginot Line, at Arras during the first retreat, at Dunkirk and after the surrender.

The war had ended his double career, in literature and politics, at a moment when it was beginning to prosper. During the summer of 1939, he had finished his most ambitious novel. He was the director (with Jean-Richard Bloch) of an afternoon newspaper that had a circulation of more than half a million. But the novel would never be published in France, although it appeared in English and Spanish translations; and the newspaper was suppressed on account of its Communist sympathies just five days be-

fore the Germans invaded Poland. Aragon, who had served at the front as a student officer in 1918, was called back into the army as a sergeant, with no hope of promotion. Then, during the rainy autumn behind the Maginot Line, he began writing poems again, just as he had written them after the last war. They had an emotional directness and a ballad style that one associates with more youthful poets—like Villon, for example, who finished his work *en l'an de son trentiesme aage*. It was as if, with the complete ending of his civilian career, Aragon had been carried away by what he calls "the waltz of the twenty-year-olds" and had returned to the mood of his young manhood.

In the first of his war poems, he compares the autumn of 1939 with the last days of the Carolingian dynasty, when harmless and powerless kings wandered about the country in ox carts. "Time," he says, "has refound its monotonous cart and yoked again its slow red oxen." In the second poem, he waits at twilight for a letter from his wife, Elsa Triolet, but at last the mail sergeant says, "Nothing." In the third, he complains to Elsa about the pains of "Abominable absence, the absinthe of war." There are in all thirteen of these poems dealing with the months he spent behind the Maginot Line. The emotions they express are love, homesickness, boredom and pity for the youngsters who have to go through everything he suffered twenty years before. Only one of them has an affirmative note: it is "Santa Espina," written in memory of the Spanish war, when the issues were so much simpler and there was no doubt whom and what you were fighting. The others have almost a post-war atmosphere of disenchantment, though at times they express a very modest hope for the future:

Perhaps not for us, but the storm will one day be over
The time of crossword puzzles will come back.

The last of them, written during the night of May 9-10, was interrupted at dawn by the order to advance into Belgium. What happened afterwards was described by Aragon not only in his later poems but also in a long letter that he sent to his friends Matthew and Hannah Josephson. It seems that he was in the vanguard of the first French troops to enter Belgium and that, because of his political record—I learned this fact from other sources—he was given the most dangerous posts. His division was one of those that were surrounded. It was, he says, "by an almost impossible stroke of luck that we were able to reach the sea and embark at Dunkerque. After less than two days in England, we returned to France by way of Brest, and we were in contact with the German army from the lower Seine until we had retreated south of Angoulême," which is less than eighty miles north of Bordeaux. One of the villages in which his division made a stand was Giverny, on the little river Epte, where Louis and I had often gone swimming together. He was taken prisoner in Angoulême, on the last

day of the war, but he managed to escape with six automobiles and thirty men. For his exploits in Belgium he was given the Croix de Guerre with palms. I think it was for leading the escape that he later received the Médaille Militaire, corresponding roughly to our Distinguished Service Cross.

Meanwhile his wife had been having another series of adventures. She stayed in Paris, thinking that Aragon might arrive in the suburbs with his regiment; then at the last possible moment she escaped to a village near Bordeaux. She was still there when the Germans occupied that region. Eluding the border guards, she made her way into the free zone, and for days she wandered up and down the highways looking for her husband's division. By a miracle she found it bivouacked along the roadside. Aragon was demobilized, and they spent the next few months in the pink château of a hospitable friend. But their life was not quite idyllic, as witness the end of his letter:

In the occupied zone my books, like those of many other French writers, can no longer be sold, while in the free zone that question does not even arise, since all the printed copies are in Paris, and they cannot be shipped across the line of demarcation. It seems quite impossible to earn a living, henceforth, as a writer; and there is even a question whether I can find any other sort of work. By being very careful with what remains from my army pay, I think we can live here in a small way until November 1. After that, who knows?

I am writing poems, and as long as the war lasted I was still able to publish them from time to time. I continue to write them, but now I keep them for myself. Elsa has just begun a long story, and I want her to finish it because the beginning is amazingly vivid. It takes a great deal of courage, however, to write without knowing what will happen to the book you are working on. It has been a terrible road since the last days we spent together. But the rest of this letter would give you a false impression if it made you feel that I have become pessimistic. Even when it is suffering, even when it is crushed, I have a confidence in my country that there is no way of expressing except by deeds; and I don't want to change a word of what I told you there in your country house—about which I dream today as if it were some image of childhood or a scene from a novel.

Your old friend (my hair is now completely white) who hasn't forgotten you.

Louis

It must have been during the summer that Aragon wrote four poems in which he pictures the Battle of Flanders and the Battle of France. One of these, called "The Lilacs and the Roses," describes the French tanks driving into Belgium, "with those who were going to die standing in the open turrets that had been heaped with lilac branches by the delirious crowd"; then, in the next stanza, the roses growing all along the path of the retreat—the roses of Anjou that were the color of burning towns on the horizon. Another poem simply lists the people and things observed during a day of civilian panic. "... The church bell that will never again sound the hour. The farm carts draped with bedclothes. A bear. A shawl. A dead man like a lost shoe, with both hands caught in his torn belly. A grandfather's clock. Herds of cattle roaming, carcasses, cries. Art bronzes lying on the ground (where will you sleep tonight?) and children perched on the shoulders of strange men. People wandering aimlessly with all the gold of the barns in their hair. Ditches where terror comes to sit"—in

a word, all the "Tapestry of the Great Fear." But afterwards the memory of those days faded out like a radio going dead. "I drank the summer like a mild wine," Aragon says. "I dreamed all during August in a pink château in Corrèze."

While he was, as he says, "demobilized by despair," he had an experience that proved decisive for his later work. He was seeking the cause of a vague sorrow that plagued him, when early one morning he heard outside his window an old French ballad. At last he knew the source of his grief, "and its refrain, like a bare foot, troubled the green waters of silence." But I had better repeat his own words, since they are now well known in France, and since they have a simplicity and rightness that cannot be rendered in English:

Mon amour j'étais dans tes bras
Au dehors quelqu'un murmura
Une vieille chanson de France
Mon mal enfin s'est reconnu
Et son refrain comme un pied nu
Troubla l'eau verte du silence.

From the moment when his grief became identified with that of his country, Aragon's poems took a different turn. He could scarcely write philippics against the invaders and expect to have them published under the Vichy regime, and yet he found ways to make his meaning unmistakable. It may even be that his poems after the armistice were improved by the necessity for always speaking in concrete symbols. Many of these were taken from French history. For example, he told how Richard the Lion Hearted (who was, after all, a French king) made a song of liberty in his prison. And Aragon concluded, "Every Frenchman resembles Blondel," the troubador who recognized Richard by his song and helped to set him free. Another poem deals with the Crusaders and the love they proclaimed for Eleanor of Aquitaine. The last stanza reads, "But it was only at last in some Syria that they truly understood the sonorous words; and wounded to death they knew that Eleanor was your name, Liberty, beloved Liberty."

French patriotism used to be regarded as the special property of conservatives like Déroulède and Barrès, who could depend on the support of the big industrialists. The radicals liked to think that the world was their fatherland; and Aragon himself was once given a suspended sentence of five years for writing a poem that insulted the French flag. But since the 1920's there has been a curious turnabout. It was the big industrialists and their supporters (including many renegade Communists and Socialists) who talked about internationalism and the new world order when they were ready to make peace with Hitler. It was the radicals as a class (although they found many conservative allies) who proved willing to risk their lives for France.

And there was another curious turnabout in French literature: it suddenly ceased to be adventurous. To judge from a few samples I have seen of writing under the Vichy regime, it is timid, formal and unspeakably dull. Many of the ablest French writers have left the country, while others have stopped working or have found that their books can no longer be published. But the French defeat turned

out to be a triumph for the novelists who wrote for glib, sentimental, Chicago boarding schools, for the little flowerlike poets with loose wrists and for the schoolteacherly critics who had spent their lives complaining about loose morals and loose grammar. Under Marshal Pétain, they became the literary law-givers.

They were furious at Aragon, not only for his political opinions but also because of the honest emotion in his verse. One of his best poems, "Lovelier than Tears," is his answer both to the critics who were attacking him and to the French fascists who were demanding his arrest: "If the echo of tanks in my verse bothers you; if there is a strange creaking of axles in my skies, it is because the storm has broken the *vox celeste* of the organ, and because I remember Dunkerque, gentlemen."

But he had a hard time publishing his work. Some of it was printed in *Le Figaro*, the one French newspaper that had preserved some literary independence (it also printed Gide's "Imaginary Conversations" before he fled to North Africa). A few songs were read over the radio. Finally a collection of his war poems appeared under the title of "Le Crève-cœur"—literally, "Heartbreak"—but only 250 copies were distributed, and the book was later suppressed by the Germans as being too patriotic. One copy, however, reached Raymond Mortimer in London by a very indirect path. As a result of his enthusiasm and that of Cyril Connolly, the editor of *Horizon*, the French text was reprinted in London.¹ Connolly wrote a fine introduction, at the beginning of which he said that "the journey of this little paper book to where it can reproduce itself becomes as miraculous as the pollination of an orchid or the flight of a winged seed to the clearing where it can take root. Art knows no frontiers, and in this roundabout way England has received its first war poet."

Through the medium of Rolfe Humphries' translations, three of which are printed in this issue, Aragon is almost the first war poet to reach this country too. I don't know what is wrong with the others, though I suspect that it is something more than lack of experience on the battle-

front. It must be that failure of imagination from which the whole world suffers today, when truth is not only stranger than our fictions, but so much swifter and more bewildering that we have almost given up the effort to capture it. There was never a time when poets and even topical novelists seemed to be living so far from the actual world. Out of a defeated nation has come the only poet who looked at the war quite simply, as if he were describing a slum or a stable or any other environment in which men are forced to live; who faced the grotesque horrors of retreat and the ignominy of surrender; and who was not ashamed to hope for liberation and love in the midst of despair:

Dansons ô mon enfant dansons la capucine
Ma patrie est la faim la misère et l'amour

—"My fatherland is hunger and poverty and love." I often wonder what has happened to Aragon since the Germans and Italians marched into what used to be called the free zone. He had been protected for a long time by his war record and by the respect that almost all French officials, even those of the Vichy government, paid to gifted writers. He had a chance to emigrate but refused to accept it, saying that the real struggle would be at home. Meanwhile his life was becoming more and more difficult. His second book of poems written after the war—he called it "Elsa's Eyes"—had to be published in Switzerland, and the author himself was permitted to import only a single copy. About this time, both the Aragons were arrested, but they were released after a few days. Last October they were living near Nice, in the territory afterwards occupied by the Italians; there has been no word from them since then. What is he doing now? What has happened to Malraux and Giono and all the other liberty-loving French writers who chose to stay where the danger was greatest? I hope that when our armies land in France we shall find them safe, as André Gide was found in Tunis. But we had better be quick.

MALCOLM COWLEY

Three Poems by Louis Aragon

The Waltz of the Twenty-Year-Olds

Good for the wind, good for the night, good for the cold
Good for the march and the bullets and the mud
Good for legends, good for the stations of the cross
Good for absence and long evenings. Funny ball
At which I danced and, children, you will dance
To the same dehumanized orchestral score
Good for fear, good for machine guns, good for rats
Good as good bread and good as simple salad

But here is the rising of the conscript sun
The waltz of the twenty-year-olds sweeps over Paris

Good for a shot of brandy at dawn and the anguish before
the attack

¹ The London edition was oversubscribed, but a few copies were sent to New York, and some of these may still be available at the Gotham Book Mart or the Holliday Bookshop.—M. C.

Good for the waiting, the storm and the patrols
Good for night silence under rocket flares
Good for youth passing and the rusting heart
Good for love and death, good to be forgotten
In the rain and shadow cloaking the battlefields
Child soldiers trundled in no other bed
But the ditch already tailored to their measure

The twenty-year-old waltz sweeps through the bistros
And breaks like a laugh at the entrance to the Métro

Army classes of yesterday, vanished dreams
Fourteen, Fifteen, Sixteen: listen. They hum
Like us the trite refrain, like us believe it
And like us in those days, may God forgive them
Value more than their lives a single moment
Of drunkenness or folly or delight
What do they know of the world? Does living mean
Quite simply, Mother, to die very young?

Good for this, good for that. My good friends I am leaving
Twenty years old. Good for the armed forces

Ah, the waltz begins and the dancer buys the same
Familiar brooches from the Arab peddlers
But this time sings the daughter of Madelon
I have used up forty years. Their twenty are coming close
Boulevard Saint-Germain and Rue Saint-Honoré
With flags in their lapels the class of Forty
Hears the word Good repeated in golden English
I want to believe with them that life is simply grand

I will forget, I will forget, forget, forget
The waltz of the twenty-year-olds will sweep away
My forty years, in the year 1940.

Translated by Rolfe Humphries and Malcolm Cowley

May Night

The ghosts avoided the road where I went by
But the mists of the field revealed their phantom breath
Night poised in delicate grace above the plain
When we had left the walls of La Bassée

A farm on fire burns in the desert's heart
The weeds of the ditch felt silence crouching there
An airplane tells its beads and then lets fall
A rocket over Ablan Saint-Nazaire.

The frightened ghosts swirl in confusion lost
Among the hundred times repeated maze
The horizon knows the rising plumes of fear
Above the homes of Arras, all ablaze

I see the interference of two wars
Here is the graveyard, here the hill appears
Night takes her orphaned sister by the hand
Our shadows join with those of other years

In grass that made no wreath we used to dream
Earth hollow, date and name without *Here lies*
Guidebooks are out of date. Perhaps we need
A renaissance of those mythologies

Blue ghosts of Vimy after twenty years
Half dead: I am the road of spiral dawn
Winding about the obelisk I know
Where the ill slumbering, ill buried go

General view of memory. Enough endured
It is finished. Rest. Which one of you cried No
At the guns' resuming noise? False Trianon
Real calvary, white crosses, grassy lawn

The living and the dead if they tremble resemble each other
Asleep in bed the living are the dead
Tonight the living are the disinterred
The dead awaken, trembling, resembling, stirred

Was ever night so infinitely night?
The music and the Muses, where are they?
The scent of broom is redolent somewhere
It is 1940 and a night in May.

Tears Are Alike

In the gray sky were porcelain angels
In the gray sky were stifled cries
I remember those days at Mainz
The black Rhine and the weeping Loreleis

You would find sometimes at the end of an alley
A Frenchman dead from a knife-blade in the back
You would find sometimes that the peace was cruel
In spite of the young white wine of the terraces

I drank their transparent Kirschwasser
I drank the vows exchanged in undertones
How lovely were the palaces and churches
I was twenty then. I did not understand

What did I know about days of defeat
When your country is a love forbidden
When you need the voice of false prophets
To bring lost hope to life again?

I remember songs that touched my heart
I remember the signs in chalk
Found in the morning scribbled on walls
We never deciphered their secrets

Who can say where memory begins
Who can say where the present ends
Where the past becomes a sentimental ballad
And sorrow a paper yellowed with age?

Like a child surprised among his dreams
The blank looks of the vanquished make you start
Then, at the tramp of guard relieving guard
The Rhenish silence shuddered to its heart.

LOUIS ARAGON

Translated by Rolfe Humphries

Diagnosis and Cure

U. S. Foreign Policy: Shield of the Republic, by Walter Lippmann. Boston: Little, Brown and Company (*An Atlantic Monthly Press Book*). 190 pages. \$1.50.

IN A SLENDER VOLUME, this pundit of the press addresses a mass audience, to expound the truth that peace is indivisible and that we must back up our commitments to its maintenance by enduring alliances as well as national force. His challenge to the intimation of a new retreat to isolation is timely, forceful and persuasive. His statement that "to be isolated is for any State the worst of all predicaments" cannot be preached too much to our people.

It should be said, parenthetically, that this book marks a new stage in the interesting evolution of a disciple of Graham Wallas. In the last quarter of a century, Mr. Lippmann's career has carried him from *The New Republic* to the now dead *Pulitzer World* to the stratosphere of columnist-consultant to the Universe. In a group which takes all wisdom for its province, he has established a particular reputation in the field of foreign relations.

The present volume should fit the mood of the many thousands on the Wall Streets and Park Avenues from

Boston to Los Angeles, who reprehend the President's domestic policies as hurting "the wise, the rich and the good," but are willing to support him from the water's edge. This group will not cavil over Mr. Lippmann's statement that we had no foreign policy during our first century as a nation, a claim which smacks of Hegelian absolutes.

The author's reference to the foreign-policy dilemma which faced Jefferson and Madison gives no hint of the parallel between the failure, from 1807 to 1811, of the embargo and non-intercourse laws, and our own Neutrality Act fantasy in 1936-39. But he rightly lauds the statesmanship of Monroe, Jefferson and Madison in making an informal alliance with Britain. This "clear and dependable agreement" with the Mistress of the Seas enabled us to enforce the Monroe Doctrine through the days of Manifest Destiny, Civil War and Maximilian, to the end of the nineteenth century.

But during these eighty years, Lippmann insists, *amour propre* kept our statesmen, publicists and historians from impressing on our people the fact that our Monroe Doctrine and other foreign commitments rested on British sea power, and that we lacked enough forces of our own to defend them. The defeat of Spain made us a world power, at the same time that Germany challenged Britain's naval might. None the less, we went right ahead with ambitious foreign commitments, greatly in excess of our own power to fulfill. These involved "an obligation outside the continental limit of the United States which may . . . have to be met by waging war," wherefore the power needed to be that "necessary to prevent such a war or to win it if it cannot be prevented."

As the author forcefully emphasizes, this lack of understanding that our commitments exceeded our means has plagued us since the Treaty of Paris, in 1899. It has led to a dangerous division between isolation and star-gazing. Until we follow "the controlling principle that the nation must maintain its objectives and its power in equilibrium," we shall continue bankrupt in foreign-policy statesmanship.

Our violent oscillations of public mood have given strange twists to our foreign policy as well as to the development of our social institutions. The episode of prohibition was no more weird than our naïve assumption that we could preach collective security to the rest of the world without contributing more than a pious prayer toward its effective preservation.

Mr. Lippmann's prescription for our foreign-policy ills is not so impressive as his diagnosis. Its implication is that the immediate post-war peace must be maintained indefinitely. It is a thesis which, during the continuation of combat hostilities, cannot but have a great hold upon large parts of our population. Its essence is that the three great victor nations, the United States, Russia and Britain, "and if possible, China," must be the "nuclear" states of an alliance which will rule the future, "within the limits of an international order that preserves the national liberties of other people."

This qualifying phrase can mean any of a dozen things, depending on the definition of its terms. The "nuclear" states doubtless would establish the pattern of this "international order," and by the same token would use their power to enforce their will. Is this either ethically right or politically practicable?

No one doubts that we have a clear obligation to see to it that the defeated enemy does not quickly recover the strength or the will to go berserk. But the efforts to freeze the pattern of a victor's peace did not work for the Holy Alliance, nor for the Council of Four at Paris in 1919. Experience suggests that they might not work this time.

The objection would seem practical as well as philosophical. Perhaps, in war, you can *make* a nation or a man do something under duress, for a moment. But while it is more difficult, surely in the long run it is more rewarding to cause the nation, or the man, to *wish* to do that same thing. Surely this is one basic difference between dictatorship and democracy. If after victory we are to have a brave new world of plenty, the need for participation by all the people in their own national destinies and directions would seem too clear for argument.

GEORGE FORT MILTON

War Fiction

The Ship, by C. S. Forester. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 281 pages. \$2.50.

The Dead Look On, by Gerald Kersh. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock. 213 pages. \$2.

Double, Double, Toil and Trouble, by Lion Feuchtwanger. New York: The Viking Press. 375 pages. \$2.75.

Ride This Night, by Vilhelm Moberg. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 252 pages. \$2.50.

THERE IS MUCH TO BE SAID for straight action stories about the present war. Being so little dependent upon mature judgment and perspective, they lose little from the warm contact of live emotions, and even while history is being made they can fulfill their transient functions.

Two recent British novels—C. S. Forester's "The Ship" and Gerald Kersh's "The Dead Look On"—serve to emphasize some of the major virtues and shortcomings of politicalized fiction. Mr. Forester is an accomplished and unpretentious story-teller. He knows well on which side his ship is painted and carefully presents that side for the delectation of the casual traveler. In his latest novel he brings Captain Hornblower up to date and scatters his personality and problems among several officers of the cruiser *Artemis* during its encounter with a vastly superior Italian force. The author is proficient in building tension and does not spare his familiar device of counterpointing the action with the incongruous and usually inappropriate feelings of the officers and men. His objectives are simple: to provide a great deal of technical information on the mechanics of sea warfare mixed with a quantum of entertainment that will put no strain on the reader's perceptive muscles. Credit him with a large degree of success.

Gerald Kersh deserves a less kindly reception for his parable of the extinction of Lidice, for he has presumed to give his version a literary quality by treating of the emotions of the people affected by the Czecho-Slovakian nightmare. With the deadly monotony of an assembly-line book-writer, he inserts all the melodramatic clichés, much as one might select a vitamin-rich dinner from a bill of fare. A widespread defect of war fiction lies in the unrepressed temptation to exploit the reader's foreknowledge of events. Mr. Kersh takes full advantage of this possibility, obtaining atmospheric effects by means of a specious mystic symbolism

constructed of hindsight and hatred: flowers fail to bloom on the fatal morning; a dog cringes in anticipation of death. However, the subject lends itself to melodrama, and, taken with adequate doses of salt, this book should be useful to produce chills of a sultry summer evening.

Lion Feuchtwanger's new book stands out not so much for its inherent qualities as for the sober way it avoids the leading pitfalls of contemporary historical fiction. Real and imaginary characters parade across his pages, completely unaware of the future course of history; their actions flow from human motives, undistorted by political antipathies. To say, however, that his characters "parade," is regrettably apt. In his customary fashion Mr. Feuchtwanger flits from person to person, but fails to utilize the intervals to develop significant interplay. "Double Double," based upon the life of Hitler's clairvoyant, appears in many respects to have been modeled around the Faust theme. It is a tale of a vain and unstable rogue who, in the interests of himself and the Nazis, exploits a genuine telepathic gift at the cost of the talent itself.

"Ride This Night!" by Vilhelm Moberg, might be called a war book inasmuch as it is a story of the suppression of free men. But it emerges from behind its social implications as an outstanding novel. Despite law and custom, the nobles of seventeenth-century Sweden took whole villages under their protection and ordered the peasants to labor on their estates. When the command was brought to the farmers of Brändebol, they formed a solemn compact to defend their freedom. When the bailiff threatened, however, promises were compromised and the men wound themselves into an ever tightening net of slavery. Only one man resisted. For his pains he was forced to flee to the forest, whence he carried on his fruitless opposition until he was hunted down.

No subtle and sophisticated lawyers, these peasants saw duties, rights and laws as immutable categories embodied in the simple functionalism of their lives; abstract thought penetrated slowly into consciousness, and then only in the guise of mystic revelation. The orderly processes of the earth guide and limit all their actions, lending a powerful inevitability to the struggle for freedom. Their symbol of liberation seemed to rise from the soul of the people and encompass them all. That is the meaning of the fiery cross, painted in blood upon a wooden slab and sent from village to village as a token of solidarity, a call to action. Each man who receives it must send it forth again with the stern order: Ride tonight! Cowards and traitors may put down the bloodstained board, but it will rise again from martyrs' graves, for the imperative need of a people is clearly the will of Nature and cannot be gainsaid.

Within this simple framework Mr. Moberg has integrated an effective story of a peasant's attempt to understand his world and keep his values intact. His experiences are limited, but within their scope he encounters the paramount problem of finding an existence that will satisfy his physical needs and permit him to retain his self-respect. The well paced, brooding tone of the narrative accents its theme; its characters are deeply and wholly realized. If the author fails in any respect, it is that his personalities remain just a shade too static under the impact of crisis, and some portion of the resolution is therefore achieved as much by external momentum as by the full depiction of growth.

ROBERT GORMAN

Item for Bandwagon

The God of the Machine, by Isabel Paterson. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 292 pages. \$2.75.

EVERY WRITER thinks his own metaphors are the only equivalents of reality. But Mrs. Paterson has raised this harmless conceit to a basic principle of political analysis.

The key logic of her book would seem to be as follows: To prove whatever it is she wants to prove, the author uses ponderous metaphors which succeed in obscuring the crucial subtleties of the issues discussed. For example: "To understand why bases cannot be established on popular suffrage, with no property qualifications, it is only necessary to try an equivalent with any other physical materials. . . . A pillar or cornerstone cannot be fixed on a heap of buckshot, or a mound of sand." In order to disprove what she disapproves of, she identifies such rejected ideas with the metaphors in which they happen to be expressed, and then denies the literal applicability of the metaphors. For example: The idea that financial considerations can possibly hold up machine production is triumphantly called "nonsense" and evidence of "savagery" because, you see, "a machine cannot be either enslaved or liberated." With heavy analogies she succeeds in complicating what is readily available in elementary textbooks of (classical) economics and available in intellectually respectable form in the work of Herbert Spencer.

Since the author chose to leave the "themes" of the book in an extremely diffuse condition, it would be forward to attempt an adequate summary for her. Seemingly it is believed that something is being proved against "planned economies," "collectivism" and "pseudo-liberals." Opposite these symbols stand pleas for a totally private school system and private ownership and management of roads and water supplies. This is the only way to organize things so that "the long circuit high energy system" can be built up and sustained. Seldom have so many *non sequiturs* crawled from such muddled pages. But such a book as this speaks for itself:

It is not only the "workingman" who overlooks this primary and unalterable relationship of man to earth, the function of private ownership in land—which goes back to the simple fact that a human body is a solid object. . . .

There has never been a military empire, nor ever can be. It is impossible, in the nature of things.

Marx was a fool with a large vocabulary of long words. . . . A parasitical pedant, shiftless and dishonest, he wanted to put in a claim on "society" solely as a consumer.

It is physically impossible for "labor" and "capital" to engage in war on each other. Capital is property; labor is men. All that can occur is sporadic rioting and possible destruction of property, for the very weapons of war on an industrial society can be produced and maintained only by "capital" and "labor" in combination.

These are not exceptional, nor lifted from edifying contexts.

Being thankfully inexperienced in the finer business of book reviewing, I am at a loss to understand how John Chamberlain could possibly say of this book that it is "the first clear piece of sustained primary political thinking that has appeared in ages." Such a statement either utterly

condemns ages of political thinking, or more serious political thinking has been going on than one book reviewer, and one author, ever dreamed of. C. WRIGHT MILLS

The Outline of a Critic

The Dramatic Criticism of George Jean Nathan, by Constance Frick. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press. 176 pages. \$2.

MISS FRICK'S VOLUME is something in the nature of a Ph.D. thesis on a distinguished dramatic critic still alive. Mr. George Jean Nathan has close to thirty books to his credit and his recorder here has undertaken to sift their contents for his views, theories and attitudes, his credo and personality as the years go forward, his approach, his naughtiness, his brilliance and the spark, exploration, audacity and vigor that he has displayed and has incited in others.

The first part of the record, after a brief glance at Mr. Nathan's life and works, takes up the "critical credo: The Art of Drama." There are citations and quotations from his writings on such matters as, for example, the definition of good drama, the rules of dramaturgy, dramatic action, dialogue, characterization, the actor and his art and the democracy of drama—for drama, he says happily, "is the stubborn, automatic echo in an artist's heart of the voice of the people from whom he has sprung." There is a long list of these subjects or principles or themes, as it were. They take up in fact a good half of the volume. The scheme is a fair one, the material unequal, often interesting and

stimulating; but the difficulty here of course is that the brevity tends to smart up Mr. Nathan's points and ways of putting them. Some of this is his own gay fault, of course, but the process does tend to distort his matter, and to do something less than justice to the solidity of his theatrical or critical position. It would doubtless be impossible in his case to do otherwise without the benefit of much more space for the discussion.

The latter half of Miss Frick's analysis conveys with more success the varied facets of this remarkable—though he may or may not relish being told so—born child of the theatre, this one of the few, as Gordon Craig wrote, events in the modern theatre. There is the wit, or the inspired imp, saying that William Archer "followed the gypsy caravan in a dress suit," of a certain androgynous young man that "his acting saved the life of Tinker Bell," or the characterization of James M. Barrie as "the triumph of sugar over diabetes." There is the discoverer, defender, promoter, and so on, of Eugene O'Neill, of Saroyan, of divers foreign dramatists and influences—though his historian's statements on this point are more final and downright than those of some, including Mr. Nathan doubtless, would be. And there is the solid, serious, resistless champion, student and tireless attendant where the dramatic art is involved, writing with high, fine precision, as in the passage where he says that "O'Neill has an aloof dignity that no other native playwright of his day has; he has a sense of world theme, a sense of character, and he knows how to write. His weakness is the weakness of italics and of monotony. He sees life too often as drama. The great dramatist is the dramatist who sees drama as life."

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This account of Mr. Nathan, as critic, is on the whole worth the reading. It would be even more so, I think, if a chapter were added on the really get-down-to-brass-tacks method that this dramatic critic has when he sets out to do a job and do it thoroughly. An excellent example of this is his article in *Esquire* a few months ago, in reply to Mr. Lawrence Langner's piece in *The New York Times* to mark the Theatre Guild anniversary, a piece full of specious claims. To his article in this case Mr. Nathan brought his round, solid method, full of immense information, brilliant attack, patient vigor and a splendid progression in the development of his matter.

STARK YOUNG

For Full Employment

Planning: Employment for All. No. 206, issued by Political and Economic Planning, London. Reprinted by The New Republic. 30 pages. 25 cents.

REACTIONARY POLITICIANS and conservative economists are gleefully destroying New Deal policy and theory. The first group literally demolishes the edifice of progress so painfully built in the last decade, while the other supplies the intellectual rationale. English politicians and economists, however, refuse to emulate their American brethren. They saw their nation caught in deadly war and they resolved to find its causes and to plan its cure.

This pamphlet, entitled "Employment for All," represents exceedingly well the kind of clear, constructive and eminently sane thinking that has been stirred up in Britain by the ferment of depression and war. Published in London by the Political and Economic Planning Association, it presents a survey of the economic problems that unquestionably will be brought on by a second Armistice. The editors recognize that the degrading aridity of unemployment will not long be tolerated by returning servicemen. They warn that any Maginot Line of social resistance will be stormed if the economic problem is not solved. And they know that breaching a fortress is a costly operation.

The proposals for economic amelioration—proposals that are now quite familiar—stress the desirability of a "high consumption" economy. Such a system emphasizes population growth, technology, foreign trade, saving, consumption habits and investment patterns as the fundamental factors in our contemporary economy.

The attainment of a high-consumption economy—the economy of abundance—may be facilitated, it is intimated, by deliberate measures to encourage spending rather than saving. Devices such as direct subsidies to consumers, low interest rates and high inheritance taxes are suggested. But the editors are aware of the limitations of these proposals. They concede that the average person saves for reasons of economic security. Since saving may become a serious impediment in a high-consumption economy it may be desirable to eliminate, or at least to weaken, existing motives for saving. That could be achieved by getting the government to underwrite a completely integrated system of social security embodying the provisions of the Beveridge plan.

Although the level of consumption may be increased by such devices, full employment will not be achieved unless supplementary measures are adopted. Consideration must be given to the manner in which savings are utilized.

PEP acknowledges this fact. A large part of its discussion is directly concerned with the investment problem. The treatment is brief, yet the essentials of the Keynes-Hansen doctrines of investment are clearly presented. These sections make the pamphlet a virtual primer of post-war economics. The concept of using fiscal policy as a lever to stimulate the economic system is well described. The authors are not afraid of a large public debt. They know full well that the burden of government debt is unimportant when prosperity is attained. The development of a suitable program of public works, properly timed and gauged so as to benefit the capital-goods industries, is fully stressed. Only in this way, says the pamphlet, can a public-works program become a "powerful instrument of stabilization."

The use of investment in Britain, it is noted, differs somewhat from its application in America. Britain, in the past, has had a much higher percentage of her funds placed in foreign trade. During the nineteenth century that economic policy became intermeshed with an imperialist political policy. The post-war world, however, cannot possibly witness a repetition of that particular conjuncture of events. The British government has been rapidly depleting its overseas investments to obtain exchange for necessary imports. The dominions, after the war, will more than ever be independent of the mother country. Forced by the logic of trade, technology and geography, the British must work for the establishment of a peaceful community of nations.

The problem of full employment is more than a matter of economics. It is a moral question. Employment is essentially a means for the development of higher levels of material welfare. Only thus, says PEP, may we realize "the technical possibilities of the twentieth century and, in full measure, the promise of democratic society."

BEN B. SELIGMAN

A Correction

In *The New Republic* of June 7, Miss Helen Fuller made the statement that "we have already moved two and one half times as many men abroad as were moved in the last war." Miss Fuller's statement was based on an official release of the War Department, but this release was issued several months ago, and referred only to the situation at that time as compared with the lapse of an equivalent period of time during the First World War. In 1917-18, 2,000,000 men were sent overseas, and the United States obviously has not sent 5,000,000 men abroad in this war.

Contributors

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